

MOTHERS AND BABIES

Giving Baby All The Health Benefits You Can

(NAPSA)—One of the best things a mother can do to give her baby a healthy start in life is something that may also help her own health.

According to an independent survey conducted by David Burnett and Associates, 100 percent of new moms cite health benefits for baby as the number-one reason for choosing to breastfeed. Only 44 percent said their own health was part of the decision.

"The extent to which breastfeeding affects a mother's health is rarely emphasized," said James Sears, M.D., noted pediatrician.

The benefits for mothers include:

- **Lowering the risk of certain diseases.** Decreasing the risk of breast cancer is one of the more important health benefits.

"Any amount of breastfeeding is beneficial to mom and baby, research shows; two weeks is good, four months is even better and more than six months is best as far as protection against breast cancer goes," said Dr. Sears.

Some studies have also shown a decrease in ovarian and uterine cancers in women who breastfeed. Another known benefit is a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Lastly, breastfeeding mothers may develop strong bones and a reduced risk of osteoporosis.

- **Destress.** Being a mother can be very stressful, especially when babies may not be sleeping for long stretches of time. Breastfeeding or pumping breast milk triggers and releases oxytocin (sometimes called the love hormone), which can help moms relax and feel less stressed.



Before deciding how you will feed your new baby, consider the health benefits of the alternatives.

Breastfeeding can also help a mother bond with a baby and may reduce postpartum anxiety and depression.

- **Shedding pounds.** Nursing mothers burn extra calories, making it easier to lose the pounds put on during pregnancy. Milk production burns 200 to 500 calories a day.

- **Save money and time.** There's no formula to purchase and no bottles to heat up during the night. Since breastfed babies are generally healthier and get sick less often than formula-fed babies, mothers don't spend as much on doctor visits and medicine. Breastfeeding is free. A non-nursing mother can spend thousands of dollars a year on formula and feeding accessories, while a quality electric pump, such as the one offered by Lansinoh, is relatively inexpensive.

For more information and a chance to win a breast pump, new and expecting moms can visit www.lansinoh.com.