



Defense Health Agency (DHA) Clinical Communities Speaker Series

Feb 2021 CCSS: Challenges in Women's and Infants' Health

S05: Evidence-Based Practice Guideline: Breastfeeding Support of the Active Duty Servicewoman

Resource List

The article [Pediatricians Are Perfectly Positioned to Help Mothers Reach Their Breastfeeding Goals](#) (2020) reviews the statistics related to breastfeeding in the United States. Healthy People 2020 had the goal that 81.9% of newborns would initiate breastfeeding. In 2016, the percentage exceeded those goals, with more than 83% of infants born initiated breastfeeding. The percentage unfortunately did not remain high; at 6 months, only 25% were still exclusively breastfeeding. Additional trends were reviewed in this study, including the data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Infant Feeding Practices Study II, which indicated 60% of US women are not reaching their personal breastfeeding goals. Another interesting finding was that formula supplementation within the first week was a strong predictor of cessation of breastfeeding. This brings forth the key discussion of this article that pediatricians are ideal health care providers to support breastfeeding care in early days.

Women veterans are a growing population with health care needs that may be unique. [Disparities in Breastfeeding Among Military Veterans](#) (2020) reviews the military experiences that may impact postpartum health behaviors, including breastfeeding. These experiences may include exposures or injuries due to service. This study identified factors that may have affected breastfeeding decisions at four weeks postpartum. Women veterans were interviewed before and after delivery between 2016 and 2018. Interesting trends revealed themselves in the analysis of the survey responses. The overall analysis suggested racial disparities in breastfeeding within veteran populations. Other factors included whether the veteran was self-employed or employed outside of the house, and participants who deployed at any point were twice as likely to breastfeed compared to those who never deployed. The article also reviews breastfeeding trends among nonveterans according to other research, and compares them to the trends in this article.

Obstacles to breastfeeding decisions have been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) issued guidance regarding the care of infants of women who are suspected to have, or are confirmed to have COVID-19. The article [When separation is not the answer: Breastfeeding mothers and infants affected by COVID-19](#) (2020), discussed how the guidance supports immediate postpartum mother-infant contact and breastfeeding with certain precautions in place, to prevent transmission of the disease. Many countries have followed WHO guidance; however some have adopted infection prevention and control policies that include post-partum separation. This article reviews the potential results of these policies and its impact on breastfeeding decisions.

The [Center for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC's\) Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity \(DNPAO\)](#) (2021) is committed to increasing breastfeeding rates throughout the United States. It provides multiple resources, including a map, which shares Breastfeeding Initiation throughout the country. The site also provides Guidelines, Recommendations and a Resource Library. The Resource Library has information for health care providers and includes research and clinical care toolkits.



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References

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