

Breastfeeding is Highly Beneficial for Mother and Baby!

Appiah et al. The Association of Lactation Duration with Visceral and Pericardial Fat Volumes in Parous Women: The CARDIA Study. The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism 2021;106(6): 1821-31.

QUOTE BOARD:

"Lactation is associated with lower risks for cardiovascular disease in women. Organ-related adiposity, which plays significant roles in the development of cardiometabolic diseases, could help explain this observation. We evaluated the association of lactation duration with visceral (VAT) and pericardial (PAT) fat volumes in women."

"The mean fat volumes across categories of lactation [none, 1-5 months, 6-11 months and ≥12 months] were 122.0, 113.7, 105.0, and 110.1 cm³ for VAT [visceral or organ fat] and 52.2, 46.7, 44.5, and 43.4 cm³ for PAT [pericardial or fat around heart], respectively."

"Changes in body weight from the first post-baseline birth to the end of follow-up mediated 21% and 18% of the associations of lactation with VAT and PAT, respectively [breastfeeding reduced overall bodyfat and bodyweight]."

Conclusion: "In this prospective study, longer cumulative lactation duration was associated with lower VAT and PAT volumes, with weight gain partially mediating these associations."

What You Need to Know:

In addition to improving the immune function, brain development, eye development, and overall health and wellbeing of babies, breastfeeding also vastly improves the immediate and long-term health of mothers.

This study conclusively shows that breastfeeding affects weight gain, and that mothers who breastfeed lose pregnancy weight faster and are much less likely to gain more weight in the future which therefore reduces fat buildup in the abdomen or around their heart – meaning less chance of diabetes and obesity and heart disease.

Other studies have shown longer duration of breastfeeding is associated with a 50% lower relative risk of progression to Type 2 diabetes in women, independent of their metabolic profiles and body size before pregnancy.

What You Need to Do:

The American College of Pediatricians (ACP) recommends breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months of a child's life and also recommends that women should continue to supplement the baby's diet with breastmilk for two years or longer if they are able.

Breastfeed (or support your wife doing so) exclusively for the first 6 months and continue for as long as possible for up to 2 years. Mother and baby will be healthier – what could be more important?

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