+ Considering Breastfeeding? Here’s what you need to know! – Patient Education on the Benefits of Breastfeeding

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Introduction

* Breastfeeding is a natural process
* Breastfeeding creates an opportunity for a bonding experience between mom and baby
* Breastfeeding decreases the cost of caring for an infant.
* Breastfeeding provides serious health benefits to mom and baby.

* With all of these benefits, why are so many moms in Mississippi deciding not to breastfeed.

The objective of my project was:
* to determine if mothers in Mississippi are deciding not to breastfeed because of lack of information about breastfeeding
* to educate expecting mothers about the benefits that breastfeeding provides
Background

Relevant Research

- CDC and Prevention Immunization Survey – Breastfeeding Report Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Ever Breastfed</th>
<th>Breastfeeding At 6 months</th>
<th>Breastfeeding At 12 months</th>
<th>Exclusive breastfeeding at 3 months</th>
<th>Exclusive breastfeeding at 6 months</th>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. National</td>
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<td>49.0</td>
<td>27.0</td>
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<td>29.9</td>
<td>16.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Benefits of breastfeeding to the baby
  - Decreases risk of asthma, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and SIDS

- Benefits of breastfeeding to the mother
  - Decreases risk of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, type 2 diabetes, postpartum depression, and allows mom to return to pre-pregnancy weight and shape faster
Methodology

Surveys were administered to expecting mothers:
- to gather demographic information
- to determine their likelihood to breastfeed
- to understand their perception of breastfeeding
- to learn about their exposure to the benefits of breastfeeding by obstetric providers

Surveys were administered to mothers in child bearing years:
- to gather demographic information
- to examine their record of breastfeeding
- to understand their perception about breastfeeding
- to learn about their exposure to the benefits of breastfeeding by obstetrics and pediatrics providers.

Handouts were provided to expecting moms based on their reported likelihood to breastfeed.
- 8-10 out of 10 – Congratulations on your Decision to Breastfeed Handout
- 2-7 out of 10 – Considering Breastfeeding? Here’s what you Need to Know handout
- 1 out of 10 – were asked if they would like a handout
Results from Surveys of Expecting Mothers

- Has your physician talked to you about breastfeeding classes or support groups for breastfeeding moms?
  - I don't remember: 0%
  - Never mentioned: 56%
  - Discussed Frequently: 12%
  - Discussed a few times: 15%
  - Might have mentioned: 17%

- Has your OB physician explained the benefits that breastfeeding provides to your child?
  - I don't remember: 3%
  - Never mentioned: 47%
  - Discussed Frequently: 17%
  - Discussed a few times: 15%
  - Might have mentioned: 18%

Expecting Moms Likelihood to Breastfeed

Scale of 1-10

Number of children

- 0: 6.5
- 1: 7 1/2
- 2: 6.75
- 3: 7
- 4: 5.5
Results from Surveys of Mothers in Child Bearing Years

- Did your physician talk to you about breastfeeding classes or support groups for breastfeeding moms?
  - I don't remember: 0%
  - Never Mentioned: 37%
  - Discussed Frequently: 26%
  - Might have mentioned: 16%
  - Discussed a few times: 21%

- Did your OB physician explain the benefits that breastfeeding provides to your child?
  - I don't remember: 0%
  - Never Mentioned: 42%
  - Discussed Frequently: 32%
  - Might have mentioned: 16%
  - Discussed a few times: 10%

- Did your child’s pediatrician discuss the benefits of breastfeeding with you?
  - I don't remember: 0%
  - Never Mentioned: 26%
  - Discussed Frequently: 21%
  - Might have mentioned: 26%
  - Discussed a few times: 27%

- Did your OB physician explained the benefits that breastfeeding provides to you, the mom?
  - I don't remember: 0%
  - Never Mentioned: 42%
  - Discussed Frequently: 16%
  - Might have mentioned: 21%
  - Discussed a few times: 21%
Discussion

Roughly half, 49.5%, of mothers reported never breastfeeding.

Greater than fifty percent of mothers that are never educated by providers on the benefits of breastfeeding.

After controlling for mothers expecting their first child, over fifty percent of moms still reported never receiving education on the benefits of breastfeeding.

Further Research Possibilities

Surveys of providers about their perception of breastfeeding and its importance.
- targeted to determine if physician feel they play a role in a mother's decision to breastfeed
- to understand what providers are doing to promote breastfeeding
- to see what providers know about the importance of breastfeeding

Expansion of the survey for Expecting Mothers and Mothers in Child bearing years to include questions:
- to gather information on where the participants visited the doctor
- to determine more specifically why participants are and are not deciding to breastfeed
- to examine if education on the benefits of breastfeeding would increase a patient's likelihood to breastfeed,
Recommendations

- 10 Steps to a Baby Friendly Obstetric Practice – Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition
- 10 Steps to a Baby Friendly Pediatric Practice – Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition
- Provide expecting mothers with handouts at throughout their pregnancy to explain the benefits of breastfeeding.
- Develop newborn classes that promote breastfeeding as well as provide over vital information to care for newborns and infants.
Conclusion

- OB providers are not discussing the benefits of breastfeeding with the majority of their patients, this may explain why Mississippi rates of breastfeeding are so low.

- Some mothers are making their decision to breastfeed without being educated on the benefits of breastfeeding.
Resources


