

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# ENSURING OPTIMAL INFANT NUTRITION

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY



# BREASTFEEDING IN THE UNITED STATES

IS AT ITS HIGHEST RECORDED LEVEL. YET, AS A NATION, WE CAN DO MORE TO ENSURE THAT MOTHERS RECEIVE THE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT THEY NEED TO BREASTFEED. AT THE SAME TIME, WE MUST PRESERVE THE RIGHT OF ALL MOTHERS TO CHOOSE THE BEST FEEDING OPTIONS FOR THEIR BABIES AND THEMSELVES, GIVEN THEIR PARTICULAR LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES.

69.5% OF MOTHERS IN THE U.S. BREASTFEED AFTER CHILDBIRTH.<sup>1</sup>

## Abbott Nutrition Supports Optimal Infant Nutrition

- Abbott Nutrition advocates breastfeeding as the first choice for infants.
- Abbott Nutrition agrees with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)<sup>2</sup> and other leading medical and health organizations that breastfeeding is the best form of infant nutrition.
- Abbott Nutrition endorses the AAP recommendation that infants weaned before 12 months of age should receive iron-fortified infant formula.<sup>2</sup>
- While it is impossible to make an infant formula that replicates breast milk, Abbott Nutrition is committed to continuously developing and producing infant formula that is as similar to breast milk in performance as possible.

32.5% OF MOTHERS IN THE U.S. CONTINUE TO BREASTFEED AT SIX MONTHS.<sup>1</sup>

- 20.8% of mothers enrolled the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) continue to breastfeed at six months<sup>1</sup> (See Table 2).
- 43.2% of non-WIC mothers continue to breastfeed at six months<sup>1</sup> (See Table 2).

77% OF MOTHERS INDICATE THEY DECIDED BEFORE CHILDBIRTH HOW THEY WOULD FEED THEIR BABY.<sup>3</sup>

## A Mother's Decision about Infant Feeding Is Very Personal

Abbott Nutrition supports the right of all mothers to choose the best feeding option for their babies and themselves given their life circumstances.

- The number one reason that women choose to breastfeed is to take advantage of its health benefits for their babies.<sup>3</sup>
- Mothers must be supported in their decisions whether they choose to breastfeed, formula feed or use a combination of both.
- If a mother is medically unable to breastfeed, chooses not to breastfeed, or decides to supplement her baby's feeding, iron-containing infant formula is the most nutritious alternative to breast milk and the recommended feeding option for babies who are weaned before one year of age.
- As outlined in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding, to increase breastfeeding rates in the United States, breastfeeding needs to be supported by the family, community, workplace, health care sector and society.<sup>4</sup>

**45%** OF ALL INFANTS BORN ANNUALLY IN THE U.S. PARTICIPATE IN THE WIC PROGRAM.<sup>5</sup>

### Abbott Nutrition Recognizes Challenges and Opportunities to Increase U.S. Breastfeeding Rates

Abbott Nutrition maintains that the following approaches can help meet HHS *Healthy People 2010* goals for breastfeeding initiation and duration rates:

- Increasing education and support programs for mothers and health care professionals
- Focusing national efforts on increasing breastfeeding rates in WIC
  - Nearly half of all infants born annually in the United States (45%) participate in the WIC program.<sup>5</sup>
  - The WIC program serves 8.0 million women, infants and children.<sup>6</sup>
  - Breastfeeding initiation and duration rates among WIC participants have increased significantly over the past 10 years, but they still lag 20 percentage points behind those of non-WIC participants<sup>1</sup> (See Table 2).
- Addressing the challenges of maintaining lactation while working outside the home
  - A significant number of mothers of infants under one year of age are employed outside the home.<sup>7</sup>
  - One-third of mothers return to work within three months of giving birth.<sup>8</sup>
  - While full-time employment generally does not limit breastfeeding initiation, it almost certainly affects breastfeeding duration.<sup>9</sup>

**92%** OF MOTHERS APPROVE OF INFANT FORMULA SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION.<sup>3</sup>

### Mothers' Attitudes and Opinions

To make an informed choice, every mother must have access to credible information on all feeding options that are available and must be supported in her decision. Attitudes and opinions emerging from a national public opinion survey of mothers' attitudes and opinions on breastfeeding and infant formula, conducted by Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates for Abbott Nutrition in August 2005, include:

- 85% identify breastfeeding as the healthiest choice for themselves and their babies
- 92% approve of the provision of free infant formula samples
- 82% say infant formula samples were not a major factor in their own infant-feeding decision
- Two-thirds believe that the government should trust women to make the best infant feeding choice for themselves and their babies
- Mothers cite "medical reasons" and "going back to work" as the most important reasons a mother would choose not to breastfeed

**Table 1: Healthy People 2010: Goals and Current Breastfeeding Rates**

|             | 2001 Baseline <sup>1</sup> | 2010 Target <sup>10</sup> |
|-------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| In-Hospital | 69.5%                      | 75%                       |
| At 6 months | 32.5%                      | 50%                       |

<sup>1</sup>Baseline includes WIC and Non-WIC participants.  
<sup>2001</sup> Statistic: Pediatrics. December 2002.  
<sup>2010</sup> Statistic: Healthy People 2010, Volumes I and II.

**Table 2: Breastfeeding Rates 2001: WIC & Non-WIC**

|             | WIC   | Non-WIC |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| In-Hospital | 58.2% | 78.5%   |
| At 6 months | 20.8% | 43.2%   |

From Pediatrics. December 2002.<sup>1</sup>

ENSURING OPTIMAL INFANT NUTRITION IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY. The government, health care industry, nonprofit and advocacy communities, and private sector all have an important role to play in this effort and should work together. With more collaboration on programs and policies to further promote and support breastfeeding mothers, everyone will benefit.

**Abbott Nutrition is committed to:**

- Preserving the right of all mothers to choose the best feeding option for their babies and themselves given their life circumstances
- Promoting breastfeeding education and support programs for mothers, families and health care professionals
- Working with legislators and policy-makers on ways to increase breastfeeding rates in the WIC program
- Supporting appropriate workplace and other breastfeeding legislation
- Building a workplace lactation program model and promoting it to the business community
- Producing premier infant formula products to ensure optimal infant nutrition when breast milk is not available or not chosen

It is essential for the success of our business that parents and health care professionals recognize Abbott Nutrition as an advocate for the health and nutritional well-being of babies and mothers. Our support of breastfeeding helps contribute to the long-term success of our business. For more information on infant nutrition and Abbott Nutrition, please visit [www.AbbottNutrition.com](http://www.AbbottNutrition.com).

1 - Ryan AS, Wenjun Z, Acosta A. Breastfeeding Continues to Increase into the New Millennium. *Pediatrics*. December 2002; 110: 1103-1109.

2 - American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement. Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk (RE9729). *Pediatrics*. Volume 100, Number 6. December 1997; 1035-1039.

3 - Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates. National Survey on Infant Feeding. July/August 2005.

4 - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *HHS Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health; 2000.

5 - United States Department of Agriculture: Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program. United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. WIC at a glance [www.fns.usda.gov/wic/aboutwic/wicatag glance.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/aboutwic/wicatag glance.htm).

6 - WIC Program Annual summary [www.fns.usda.gov/pd/wisummary.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/wisummary.htm)

7 - Neifert M. *Dr. Mom's Guide to Breastfeeding*. 1998; 281.

8 - Roe B, Whittington LA, Fein SB, Teisl MF. Is There Competition Between Breastfeeding and Maternal Employment? *Demography*. 1999; 36: 157-171.

9 - Visness CM, Kennedy KI. Maternal Employment and Breastfeeding: Findings from the 1988 National Maternal and Infant Health Survey. *American Journal of Public Health*. 1997; 87: 945-950.

10 - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Healthy People 2010, Volumes I and II*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health; January 2000.

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