Breastfeeding has kept our people and traditions strong since the beginning of time.

Benefits for Baby
- Breastfeeding is convenient.
- Breastfeeding shrinks the uterus and helps stop bleeding after birth.
- Breastfeeding means less risk of breast and ovarian cancer for mom.
- Moms may return to their pre-pregnancy weight quicker.
- Breastfeeding helps a mother and her baby bond.

Benefits for Mom
- Breastfeeding may mean fewer weight problems and less diabetes for the next generation.
- Breastfeeding means stronger and wiser leaders for the challenges of the future.
- Breastfeeding is a message of hope for our tomorrows.

Benefits for the Community
- Breastfeeding saves valuable, natural resources and keeps our environment clean.
- Breastfeeding means fewer dollars will be spent on illness.
- Breastfeeding will reduce time lost from work and school because of sickness.
- Breastfeeding honors our values, heritage and traditions.

All things are connected, whatever befalls the earth, befalls the children of the earth.

Breastfeeding for Native American Families

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How do I know that my baby is getting enough milk?

Trust your body to do what Native American women have always done. The first few days, expect baby to eat every 2-3 hours and have several diapers to change.

By the end of the first week, you can expect six or more diaper changes each day. Feeding on demand, or every 2-3 hours, will tell you if baby is eating enough.

It is normal for breastfed babies to eat often. Your milk is a perfect match for your baby. It is easily digested, and your baby's stomach is very small, so they need to “refill” often.

After the first week, baby will be an expert and have a larger stomach to hold more. Feedings will be further apart and take less time.

Is breastfeeding easy?

Once breastfeeding is established, it is easy. Breastfeeding is natural; but you, your body, and your baby need time to adjust.

Breastfeeding is not painful, your nipples may be sensitive at first.

Since before anyone can remember, Native American women have made enough milk for their babies, often they fed more than one child at a time.

You are giving your baby a gift that only you can give! We are here today because our ancestors breastfed. All of our great leaders were breastfed. Women’s ability has not changed.

Nurture yourself as you would nurture your baby. Be patient with yourself, slowly you and your baby will learn together and make a great team.

Resources:

- UTTC Extension Nutrition Educators are able to discuss UTTC’s Baby to Work or Class policy & UTTC’s Breastfeeding Pumping Room policy.
- www.ndhealth.gov/breastfeeding Workplaces in North Dakota can be designated as an “Infant Friendly Workplace”. UTTC is listed as a ND Infant Friendly Workplace.
- www.gotmomma.com – find many resources and local programs and professionals to ask questions and get support
- Intertribal WIC Breastfeeding support – call your local WIC office to talk to the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor or WIC Nutritionist or Dietitian

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