

**For Immediate Release**

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**August Is National Breastfeeding Awareness Month**  
*Noted Ob/Gyn Tells Top-Ten Reasons Why Breast Is Best*

**Cartersville, Ga.; (July 22, 2013)**—August is National Breastfeeding Awareness Month, and organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), American Public Health Association, United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) agree that breastfeeding is the best choice for the health of a mother and her baby.

Dr. Hugo Ribot, Jr., managing partner of Cartersville Ob/Gyn Associates ([www.cartersvilleobgyn.com](http://www.cartersvilleobgyn.com)) and Medical Director of the Georgia Advanced Surgery Center for Women ([www.ga-advancedsurgerycenter.com](http://www.ga-advancedsurgerycenter.com)), offers these top-ten reasons why “the breast is best.”

- 1. Health benefits** – Breast milk, a natural immunity booster, contains antibodies that protect babies from illnesses and disease. Research proves that breastfed babies have a lower risk of stomach viruses, respiratory illnesses, asthma, ear infections and meningitis. Studies also suggest that breastfed babies have higher IQs than formula-fed babies.
- 2. Lower risk of SIDS** – Breastfeeding lowers the risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome). A large German study published in 2009 concluded that exclusive breastfeeding at one month of age cut the risk of SIDS in half. Another study said that babies who were exclusively breastfed for six months had a 73 percent reduction in the risk of SIDS, and babies who were breastfed for any amount of time had a 60 percent reduction in their risk.
- 3. Lower cancer risk** – Breastfeeding is healthy for mom, too. Studies suggest that breastfeeding lowers the risk of breast and ovarian cancer in women. Breastfeeding also is linked to lower risk of Type 2 diabetes and postpartum depression.
- 4. Burn calories, burn!** – Breastfeeding also helps moms stay healthy by helping them take off baby weight. Breastfeeding burns about an additional 500 calories a day. Breastfeeding mothers typically lose one to four pounds per month without restricting their calorie intake.
- 5. It’s free!** – There’s no cost of buying formula, bottles, nipples, sterilizers and cleaners with breastfeeding. Also, for moms who wish to pump and store their milk between feedings, the new Affordable Care Act law includes a provision requiring insurance companies to cover the costs of breast pumps (rented or purchased from approved vendors) as well as visits to lactation consultants. What’s more, moms can sell or donate their stored milk to a milk bank.
- 6. No mix, no mess** – Breast milk is always ready, and there’s no messy formula to measure and mix while the baby is hungry and fussy. Breast milk is always the right temperature, too. There’s no heating or testing temperature on your wrist.
- 7. Bonding with baby** – It’s important for moms to engage in physical contact, specifically skin-on-skin contact, with their newborns to foster a sense of security, warmth and comfort. Breastfeeding provides this physical closeness, which increases the bond between mommy and baby. Mothers also can benefit from this closeness: the skin-to-skin contact can boost oxytocin hormone levels, which has a calming effect and helps milk to flow.
- 8. Nature-made** – A mother’s milk is as natural as it gets. There are no additives, fillers or GMOs in breast milk. It’s also environmentally friendly. There are no plastic containers to recycle or send to landfills, nor methane gas emissions from cows producing it.
- 9. Endless supply** – Breastfeeding on demand produces all the milk a mother needs to feed her child, eliminating last-minute trips to the store for more. For women who have trouble producing enough milk due to illness or multiple births, there are medications and herbs to help promote breast milk production.
- 10. Easier to digest** – Breast milk is “custom made,” meaning *your* milk is specially formulated to have the right composition for *your* baby, and to contain exactly the right amounts of nutrients. This custom-made milk, which consists mainly of proteins from whey (not casein like in cow’s milk and formula), is easier for babies to digest and absorb.

While most experts would agree that breast is best, there are a variety of reasons why a woman might not be able to breastfeed. For example, mom may have trouble producing milk due to illness, or may experience painful breast infections. Baby may have trouble latching or be allergic to breast milk. It’s vitally important for every mother to make the best choice for her baby, whether that’s breast or bottle, formula or breast milk. It’s equally important that everyone in her family and peer group support her decision. To learn more about National Breastfeeding Awareness Month, visit [www.usbreastfeeding.org](http://www.usbreastfeeding.org).