

# PREVALENCE OF BREASTFEEDING

Data are from the  
MAINE PREGNANCY RISK ASSESSMENT MONITORING SYSTEM (PRAMS): 1997

➔ **Healthy Maine 2000 objectives include an objective to increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed one week or more to 75% and to increase to 50% those who are breastfed for 13 weeks or longer.<sup>1</sup>**

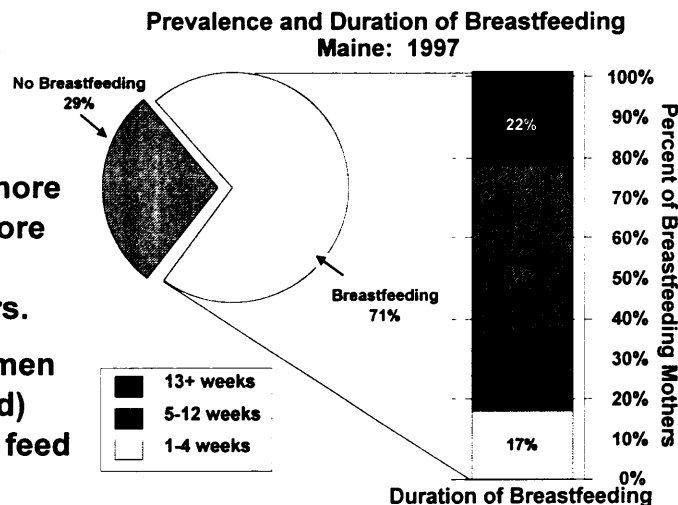
➔ **In 1997, 71% of Maine's new mothers breastfed their infants after delivery. This was a significant increase over 1990 when 59% of new mothers breastfed.**

➔ **Women who have 12 or more years of education are more likely to breast feed their babies than other mothers.**

➔ **Adolescent mothers (women younger than 20 years old) were less likely to breast feed than older mothers.**

➔ **Women who breastfed were more likely to be married and were more likely to have delivered an infant with normal birth weight.**

➔ **In 1997, 29% of new mothers did not breastfeed. They gave a variety of reasons for making that choice:**



REASONS GIVEN FOR CHOOSING NOT TO BREASTFEED *	
▪ 67% didn't want to	▪ 8% thought breastfeeding took too long
▪ 21% had to go to work/school	▪ 6% thought bottle feeding was better
▪ 10% were taking medications	▪ 28% gave other reasons

\* Respondents could check more than 1 reason.

➔ **Many health care providers discussed breastfeeding with their prenatal care patients; of those women, those with annual incomes below \$8,000 were 17% less likely to breastfeed than women with incomes between \$8,000 and \$20,000, and 29% less likely to than women with incomes of \$20,000 or more.**

➔ **Of the women who breastfed after delivery, approximately 40% had discontinued by the time they completed the PRAMS survey. The most frequently cited reasons for stopping were the need to return to work or school (28%) and not having enough milk (28%).**

Footnotes 1: *Healthy Maine 2000: Midcourse Review*. A full citation is available upon request.

For further data on this topic, please contact:  
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