

July 31, 2018

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK AND NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING MONTH

BREASTFEEDING: MANY HEALTH BENEFITS FOR MOM & BABY



Contact:

Arlease Hall Arlease.Hall@FLHealth.gov 772-370-1391

St. Lucie County, FL — The Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie will celebrate National Breastfeeding Month during the first week of August, which is recognized as World Breastfeeding Week.

“A growing body of evidence points to breastfeeding as a critical factor, in improving health outcomes of mothers and babies, and it is considered most beneficial to families and communities. Breastfeeding is an investment in health, not just a lifestyle decision.” said Clint Sperber, Health Officer and Administrator of the Florida Department of Health in St. Lucie County. According to 2016 data from Florida Charts, Bureau of Vital Statistics, breastfeeding initiation rates in St. Lucie are trending up, from 80.4 percent of mothers initiating breastfeeding in 2014, to 82.7 percent in 2016. However, St. Lucie rates are still below the state.

Low rates of breastfeeding add more than \$3 billion a year to medical costs for the mother and child in the United States. Black infants are 21% less likely to have ever been breastfed than white infants. Only 1 in 4 infants is exclusively breastfed as recommended by the time they are 6 months old.

Benefits for infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of: asthma, obesity, type 2 diabetes, ear and, respiratory infections and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The benefits for mothers that choose to breastfeed can include a lower risk of: heart disease, diabetes, ovarian cancer and breast cancer.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program provides breastfeeding support as well as nutrition education, counseling, and nutritious foods for eligible pregnant women, breastfeeding and post-partum women, infants and children up to age five who meet eligibility guidelines. WIC has added new foods including fruits, vegetables, whole grain pasta and flour tortillas, yogurt, organic baby fruits and vegetables for infants at six months of age in addition to the many other nutritious foods.

Call the WIC office for an appointment in St Lucie West at 772-785-6124 or in Fort Pierce at 772-462-3900 or visit www.stluciecountyhealth.com.



The WIC Program will host the following activities:

August 1, 2018 (Wednesday)

11:00 a.m. | St. Lucie County WIC Program | **531 NW Lake Whitney Place | Port St. Lucie**
Anne Alexander, local WIC Peer Counselor/League Leader will present how much easier it is to prepare for a natural disaster when you are breastfeeding.

12:00 p.m. | Presenting, Dr. Monique Mondesir of Optimal Care Pediatrics
Major misconceptions about breastfeeding.

1:00 p.m. | Ashley Avant and Kimberly Moore | Food safety topic and demonstrating Black Bean and Corn Salsa by University of Florida IFAS Extensions Family Nutrition Program.

3:00 p.m. | Baby Wearing Demonstration | Our local WIC Peer Counselor will present the many uses of baby wearing for that busy mom/dad.

August 2, 2018 (Thursday)

10:00 a.m. | St. Lucie County WIC Program / **714 Avenue C | Fort Pierce**
Ashley Avant and Kimberly Moore | Food safety topic and demonstrating Black Bean and Corn Salsa by University of Florida IFAS Extensions Family Nutrition Program.

11:00 a.m. | Anne Alexander our local WIC Peer Counselor/League Leader will present how much easier it is to prepare for a natural disaster when you are breastfeeding.

12:30 p.m. | Presenting, Dr. Monique Mondesir of Optimal Care Pediatrics
Major misconceptions about breastfeeding.

3:00 p.m. | Baby Wearing Demonstration | Our local WIC Peer Counselor will present the many uses of baby wearing for that busy mom/dad.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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