Exclusive breastfeeding protects mothers' and babies' health

- Breast milk provides all the nutrients infants need as well as specific factors needed to build a strong immune system. Breastfeeding saves lives everywhere in the world. It is estimated that $3 billion in medical costs would be saved if all U.S. infants were fed according to the current guidelines.

- In-hospital support is crucial to breastfeeding mothers' success. Mothers who experience supportive practices are more likely to breastfeed exclusively during and after the hospital stay.

- Hospitals that have instituted supportive policies have high rates of breastfeeding, no matter where they are located or what populations they serve. As more California hospitals have made these quality improvements, in-hospital exclusive breastfeeding has increased since 2010 from 56.6% to 69.4%.

Baby-friendly policies: a focus for improvement

- For many years, California advocates and policymakers have used hospital-level surveillance data to promote and monitor systems change to improve the quality of perinatal care. This work has shown that uniformity in policies and practices is possible across more than 200 maternity hospitals in our large and diverse state.

- The WHO Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, through its evidence-based policies and guidelines, has provided the focus and structure for this ongoing effort to ensure that all mothers and babies receive the highest quality of care.

- Today, California leads the nation with nearly 100 Baby-Friendly hospitals and legislation requiring that all maternity hospitals adopt these or similar policies by 2025 (SB402, 2013).
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8. California Department of Public Health, Center for Family Health, Genetic Disease Screening Program, Newborn Screening Data, 2016. (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DMCAH/Pages/Topics/In-Hospital-Breastfeeding-Initiation-Data.aspx)


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8. California Department of Public Health, Center for Family Health, Genetic Disease Screening Program, Newborn Screening Data, 2016. (https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DMCAH/Pages/Topics/In-Hospital-Breastfeeding-Initiation-Data.aspx)


