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DID YOU KNOW?

Phthalate Update

This month Heidi Green brings us up to date on phthalates, harmful compounds that have been found in toys as well as in baby lotions, shampoos, and powders. To learn about plans by Toys"R"Us and Wal-Mart to help limit children's exposure to phthalates, see [Phthalates in Toys to Be Reduced](#). For tips on choosing products without phthalates, see [Phthal-whats?](#)



FEATURE ARTICLE

Benefits of Breastfeeding Bolstered

In case you had doubts about the value of breastfeeding, recent baby gooroo postings give mothers more reasons to breastfeed.

In [Of Mice and Men](#), Amy Spangler shares French scientists' findings that breastfeeding protects mice from developing asthma. When lactating mice were exposed to ovalbumin, a well-known allergen, their breastfeeding babies were less likely to develop symptoms such as wheezing than their non-breastfeeding babies. The researchers theorize that mother mice pass allergens to their babies through their breastmilk, and that the allergens act in turn to prevent future allergies. The results with mice may help scientists discover new ways to prevent allergies from developing in humans.

In [Does Breastfeeding Protect Against Less Common Infections?](#) Amy describes results of a study on whether breastfeeding protects against infections in infants with a ventriculoperitoneal (VP) shunt. The study, conducted by researchers at Children's Hospital Medical Center in Tehran, Iran, showed a significant relationship between the amount of breastfeeding and lower incidence of shunt infection.

You may already be breastfeeding for your baby's sake, but there's also something in it for *you*. Check out [Good for Mothers, Good for Babies](#) by Heidi Green. Heidi reports a recommendation from the American Institute for Cancer Research that women breastfeed their babies exclusively for the first 6 months—for the benefit of both babies *and* mothers. Mothers who have breastfed will have less risk of breast cancer both before and after menopause, and



their breastfed children, who are less likely to become overweight or obese, will have a lower risk of several common cancers.

If you're considering whether to *continue* breastfeeding, see Pauline Luperio's [Breastfeeding: When Is It Time to Stop?](#) and Kendall Cox's comments in response. The article emphasizes a woman's freedom to choose extended breastfeeding despite what others might think, and the comments provide an expanded frame of reference based on experiences on another continent.

WHAT'S NEW

For timely information on breastfeeding and related child health topics, please visit [baby gooroo](#).

SCIENCE OR SCIENCE FICTION?

Galactagogues—Magic or Myth?

The effectiveness of galactagogues—substances said to increase milk production—is the subject of a literature [review](#) conducted by Philip Anderson and Veronica Valdes. The authors found that most studies had flawed methodology. "Of the four well-designed studies that did provide maternal lactation education, three found that galactagogues made no difference in lactation success," said the authors. Results of the fourth study could not be interpreted.

Further details of the review, published in the December 2007 issue of [Breastfeeding Medicine](#), appear in [Searching for a Magic Bullet](#) by Amy Spangler. Amy concludes, "In the end, there is no substitute for effective position and latch, frequent and untimed feedings, and good knowledge and support."

CAUGHT IN THE WEB

Breastfeeding in Public: Support, Don't Thwart

Three recent baby gooroo articles by Heidi Green include links to websites that show women joining forces and getting creative to boost support for breastfeeding in public.

Read [FirstRight Ready to Help](#) to learn about a new breastfeeding advocacy group that helps support mothers who believe they have been discriminated against while breastfeeding in public.

For a humorous approach to breastfeeding education, see [Breastfeeding with the Funny Pages](#), which describes a comic strip story line by Jan Eliot that highlights the ironies of complaints about mothers breastfeeding in public.

To find out about an annual event in which mothers bring their babies to breastfeed simultaneously at registered sites throughout the world, follow [this link](#).



EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

Please visit [baby gooroo](#) for a complete listing of upcoming events.

Amy's Babies is pleased to present *Feeding Times*.

With the launch of [baby gooroo](#), our new online community, we are now able to share information 24/7. *Feeding Times* will continue to be distributed electronically. Subscribers will receive a PDF containing links to selected feature articles, expert commentaries, scientific data, legislative updates, product alerts, upcoming events, real-life experiences, and more—all of which can be easily accessed through [baby gooroo](#). For additional information about our products and services, please visit our [website](#).

Email questions and comments to info@amysbabies.com.

IT'S THE LAW

Fatty Acid Failings—Parents, Be Forewarned

Okay, there is no law yet that infant formula containing the omega fatty acids [DHA](#) and ARA must carry a warning on its label. But these omega fatty acids, occurring naturally in breastmilk, are added to formula as lab-produced varieties that can cause diarrhea and vomiting in some infants, according to the [Cornucopia Institute](#) and the [National Alliance for Breastfeeding Advocacy](#) (NABA). The added omega fatty acids are said to be extracted from fermented algae and fungus with hexane, a neurotoxic chemical.

About 90 percent of infant formulas now contain omega fatty acid additives. Babies may suffer from diarrhea for months without their parents knowing that infant formula with omega fatty acids could be the cause.

The Cornucopia Institute and NABA have filed a petition with the Food and Drug Administration requesting that warning labels be required for all infant food products containing DHA and ARA omega fatty acids.

To learn more about this issue and how you can help, see [A New Call for Warning Labels on Infant Formula](#) by Barbara Behrmann. Marsha Walker, Executive Director of NABA REAL, responds with comments.

