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👁️ FEATURE ARTICLE

Vaccination: A National Success Story?

All parents want to protect their children from illness, disease, and poor health, but what do you do when the advice you receive is full of contradiction and controversy? Unfortunately, this is precisely the case when it comes to childhood vaccinations. [Barbara Behrmann discusses](#) the results of a new [study](#) that appeared recently in *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*.



💡 DID YOU KNOW?

Birds, Bees, and Breastfeeding

Think back to your school days. Did you learn about breastfeeding? If the answer is no, you won't want to miss [Birds, Bees, and Breastfeeding](#) in which Heidi Green discusses the results of a recent [survey](#) of college students' recollection of their middle and high school breastfeeding education and their subsequent attitudes about breastfeeding.

Particularly compelling is the fact that over two-thirds (68 percent) indicated that public breastfeeding was "not acceptable," and that even more (78 percent) said it was an "intimate act" that should take place "in private."



✍️ WHAT'S NEW

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

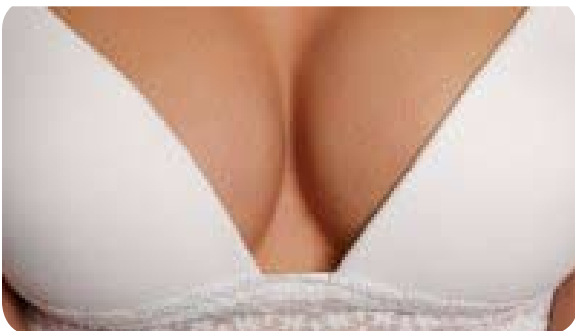
SCIENCE OR SCIENCE FICTION?

Busted! The Truth About Breastfeeding and Sagging Breasts

Wondering if breastfeeding really was the culprit causing breasts to sag, Rinker and colleagues conducted a study that looked at patients' medical history, body mass index, pre-pregnancy bra cup size, and smoking status.

A total of 132 women who came to the University of Kentucky's clinic for a breast lift or augmentation between 1998 and 2006 participated in the study. Participants' average age was 39 years. Nearly all (93 percent) had had at least one pregnancy. Over half (58 percent) had breastfed at least one child. Breastfeeding duration ranged from 2 to 25 months and averaged 9 months.

Contrary to popular belief, no difference was found in the degree of breast sag for those women who had breastfed at least one child and those who had not. However, researchers did identify several other factors that influenced breast sagging, including age, smoking, pre-pregnancy breast size, and number of pregnancies. For more information, see [Busted! The Truth about Breastfeeding and Sagging Breasts](#) by Heidi Green.



ASK AMY

Q. I have a breast abscess that requires incision and drainage. Does continuing to breastfeed increase the risk of a fistula forming?

A. For those unfamiliar with the term, a fistula is an abnormal connection between two internal organs or between an internal organ and the skin. Fistulas are usually the result of an injury but can be caused by disease or a birth defect. Fistulas are most often found in the gastrointestinal or urinary tract.

Mothers who have a breast abscess and continue to breastfeed are actually less likely to develop a fistula. Often there is short-term drainage through the incision—first blood and then milk. If you continue to breastfeed, as the inflammation goes down, the milk will exit through the milk ducts more and more, so less and less will come through the drainage or incision site. More often, epithelial growth factors and cellular components in the milk speed the healing process when compared to that of other types of abscesses, so the wound should close faster.

Attempting to wean during this process gives the milk no choice but to exit through the incision site. Since the milk has this alternate exit route, milk production continues as long as there is milk flow through the incision site. The result is that milk flow is reinforced, so milk keeps the drainage site open. At the same time, the milk encourages the tissue to heal around the opening, so now the opening at the drainage site becomes a permanent fistula.

“The surgical literature that reports fistula formation in lactating women actually shows fistula formation subsequent to weaning. If a mom continues to breastfeed, there will be normal milk flow through the incision site and no fistula formation,” said [Tina Smillie, MD, IBCLC](#), Director of Breastfeeding Resources in Stratford, CT.



EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

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

Amy's Babies is pleased to present *Feeding Times*. The January 2008 issue reflects our transition from a quarterly newsletter to a monthly news bulletin.

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

Confused about SCHIP?

If you are completely confused about the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), see the [baby gooroo article](#) on how you can now access three interactive tools courtesy of the [Children's Defense Fund](#) (CDF). The tools include an [SCHIP reauthorization timeline](#), a [born uninsured counter](#), and a [map of states](#) that reflects SCHIP shortfalls if Congress fails to authorize an increase in funding.

CAUGHT IN THE WEB

Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?

Despite overall declines in infant mortality among U.S. infants, the rate for black infants is more than double that of white infants—13.5 deaths per 1,000 births for blacks, compared to 5.7 deaths per 1,000 births for whites. Moreover, black women are twice as likely to give birth prematurely and nearly four times as likely to die during pregnancy.

The Institute of Medicine in a 2006 [report](#) on preterm birth concluded that differences in socioeconomic conditions, maternal behaviors, stress, infection, and genetics cannot fully account for the racial/ethnic disparities.

More recently, the [Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies](#), with funding from the [W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#), the [UCLA School of Public Affairs](#), and the [University of Michigan's National Institutes of Health Roadmap Disparities Center](#), formed a 19-member Commission—[Courage to Love: Infant Mortality Commission](#)—charged with examining basic assumptions, redefining the problem, and formulating recommendations for policy, research, and practice. For a summary of the commission's findings, see [Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?](#)