Mother’s Milk

Cancer is the leading cause of death for American Indian and Alaska Native women in the U.S.

Breastfeeding can reduce the risk of cancer and cancer risk factors:

**Mom**
- breast cancer
- ovarian cancer
- heart disease
- high cholesterol
- hypertension
- type II diabetes

**Baby**
- obesity
- type I diabetes
- type II diabetes
- leukemia and other childhood cancers

Feeding baby only breast milk for the first 4-6 months, with continued breastfeeding along with solid foods up to 2 years of life is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Mother’s milk contains cells, hormones, antibodies and cancer-fighting cells that protect babies from illness by improving their immune response.

It may be possible to breastfeed as a cancer survivor, talk to your healthcare provider about your options.
Partner and family support:

- **Let her know** you support her choice to breastfeed
- **Be proactive** and ask about her needs
- **Take care of** other baby needs: change diapers, prepare feeding space, hold baby when not nursing, etc.
- **Make sure** mom is getting plenty of fluids, food and rest
- **Cheer** her on, it’s not always easy
- **Take the lead** in daily chores
- **Shop and cook** for the family
- **Care for** older children

Where to turn for help:

- Your healthcare provider
- Local WIC program or call the national number at 703-305-2746
- National Breastfeeding Helpline 800-994-9662
- International Lactation Consultant Association – www.ilca.org
- La Leche League and their local support group – www.llli.org

**Plan ahead, talk with your family and provider about breastfeeding so you are ready when baby arrives!**