



Corporate
Lactation Services

NEWSLETTER ON BABY WEARING

WHAT IS BABY WEARING?

Baby wearing is a way of keeping your baby close to you. This has been done throughout the centuries, with many cultures having their own method of baby wearing. For example, the Native American Tribes such as Navajo, Apache, Ute traditionally use a cradle board. Mayan women carry babies in a Mexican rebozo and in Japan, mothers wrap their babies in their Obi sashes.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BABY WEARING FOR YOUR BABY?

Your baby benefits from baby wearing due to the closeness with you or special caregiver. This closeness helps your baby feel secure and loved. Studies have shown that when a baby feels secure and loved, this leads to a more independent young adult. Sometimes, a new parent will worry about spoiling their baby by holding too often. The studies have shown that the opposite is true. Carrying promotes a sense of security and contentment. It has also been found that babies who are carried have better digestion. The constant motion and frequent small feedings help promote good digestion. Another benefit to baby wearing is that your baby is constantly readjusting his/her muscles while being carried, thus enhancing motor skills. This also helps baby to have a round head because the carrier keeps pressure off the back of your baby's head. The frequent eye contact and speaking to your baby helps your baby have

better visual alertness and language development. And, babies who are carried are calmer and cry less.

WHAT ARE SOME OPTIONS FOR BABY WEARING?

There are three styles of baby wearing that are primarily used including **wraps**, **ring slings** and **structured carriers**. Many **wraps** are 100% cotton so they are soft and easy to use and work well for newborns as well as toddlers. **Wraps** are long rectangular pieces of fabric that you wrap around yourself and your baby to create a carrier. Getting a **wrap** on involves a multi-step process, while **ring slings** and **soft structured carriers** may be easier to put on. **Ring slings** are made from one piece of fabric that is worn across your torso and loops through two rings on your shoulder. This creates a pouch for your baby. These are typically easy to use but do not evenly distribute the weight causing pressure on the shoulder with the rings. The **soft structured carriers** are usually designed with older babies in mind although they can be adapted for newborns. The advantage to **structured carriers** is that they are usually quick to put on. They often have padded straps and waistbands that give more support when carrying an older/heavier baby.

Review the directions for a wrap, ring sling or structured carrier before you make the purchase. Note care instructions for ease of cleaning. Wraps and slings may be tucked into a diaper bag while a soft structured carrier is usually too bulky.

HOW DOES BABY WEARING AFFECT BREASTFEEDING?

Baby wearing is a wonderful way to complement your breastfeeding relationship with your baby. When your baby is close, you are quickly aware of when your baby begins to wake up and wanting to nurse. Catching the early feeding cues is an opportunity to feed your baby when they are just starting to get hungry.

It is also possible to nurse discreetly when your baby is in a wrap or sling as the fabric shields baby and mother from public view. This can take some practice once carrying skills and breastfeeding skills are both mastered.

BENEFITS OF BABY WEARING FOR PARENTS

When babies are born, they have the need be close to their parent. This is an important survival mechanism for babies. The challenge that often comes for a parent is wanting to meet the needs of their baby but also doing some of the other things necessary to maintain a household etc. Carrying your baby frees your hands and allows you to take care of some of the necessary tasks while knowing that your baby is in a comfortable, safe place. Typically, you can work on the computer, dust, sweep, wash dishes, tie shoelaces etc all with your baby close to you.

HOW TO WEAR YOUR BABY SAFELY

- ♥ Be sure to check the manufacturer's recommendations for age/weight that your wrap, ring sling or structured carrier is designed for.
- ♥ Check to be sure your baby is not curled up tightly in a chin to chest position. There should be a finger's width or two between your baby's chin and chest.
- ♥ Your baby should be close enough to kiss while being carried.
- ♥ Make sure your baby's back is straight and supported.
- ♥ Always monitor your baby. Be sure nothing is covering their face.
- ♥ Once your baby has good neck control at about 5 - 6 months, you can begin to face your baby away from the adult. This is done in short segments of up to 20 minutes and baby should not sleep facing out.
- ♥ Avoid carrying your baby when near a hot stove or drinking a hot beverage.

CORPORATE LACTATION SERVICES

We are here to provide support you in meeting your breastfeeding goals.

My Corporate Lactation Services Lactation Consultant: _____

Phone number: 1.888.818.5663 X _____

REFERENCES

<https://wrapyourbaby.com/cultural-babywearing/>

<https://www.lli.org/breastfeeding-info/baby-wearing/>