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# BFREE E-Newsletter

## SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT: FIRST NYS BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY PRACTICE IN METROPOLITAN REGION

*“Just yesterday, a mother was having a great deal of trouble establishing breastfeeding and wanted to start formula supplementation. She was referred to our CLC, who provided her with extensive support, and the mother left the office with no further intentions of supplementing. We expect many more of these stories in the future.”*

- Dolan staff member

On August 9, 2016, Dolan Family Health Center became the first practice in the Metropolitan area (composed of New York City, Long Island, and the mid-Hudson region) to achieve formal Breastfeeding Friendly designation, an opportunity available to all pediatric, family, and obstetric practices in New York State. With assistance from members of the BFREE team, Dolan successfully implemented the 10 steps developed by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) in approximately one year. As of June 2017, only 43 practices throughout the state have achieved this designation, 27 (63%) of which are in Erie County. A full list of designated practices can be found here: <https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/breastfeedingpractices.htm>.

Dolan Family Health Center is a family medicine clinical practice that serves Huntington Station and neighboring towns in Suffolk County on Long Island. Approximately 83% of its pediatric patient population is covered by Medicaid or has Medical Assistance and is eligible for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program.

Prior to working with the BFREE team, Dolan staff was knowledgeable about breastfeeding support, but lacked resources for teaching breastfeeding in the office and did not know where to refer patients for further community support. With leadership buy-in, the BFREE team worked with the identified site champion to develop a written breastfeeding policy, create a birth plan with the obstetrics department, preparing mothers to breastfeed after delivery, provide trainings and culturally-appropriate resources, and support 2 healthcare personnel in becoming Certified Lactation Counselors (CLCs). Dolan staff also partnered with Cornell Cooperative Extension and introduced bilingual Spanish breastfeeding classes.

One year after achieving designation, Dolan’s site champion reports that she has noticed an increase in the number of women willing to exclusively breastfeed from the start of their pregnancies. She has also noticed Dolan staff members demonstrating increased awareness of and sensitivity to accommodating mothers who wanted to breastfeed at the center. She elaborates, “It is most definitely a group effort, and everyone knows what role they play in helping to support breastfeeding here.”



Original artwork by Dondei Dean



Creating  
Breastfeeding Friendly  
Communities

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**THANK YOU** for being a part of the BFREE Steering Committee!

- Wendi Andria
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- Gail Burrus
- Emily Connolly
- Colleen Farrell
- Ellen Higgins
- Edward Hill
- Grace Ioannidis
- Donna Moravick
- Jennifer Shaer
- Sharon Oliver-Murthy

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello!

Thank you for collaborating with us on this important initiative to promote maternal and child health. As breastfeeding is such a critical preventive health measure, we are thrilled to be working together in support of mothers achieving their breastfeeding goals.

The purpose of this quarterly e-Newsletter is to broadly share our ongoing work. In each issue, we will feature editorials from breastfeeding and pediatric experts, success stories from our partners, testimonials from breastfeeding mothers, and upcoming events or announcements of interest. We hope that this e-Newsletter will help our coalition stay connected and be up-to-date on each other's accomplishments and progress.

Since our 5-year NYSDOH grant launched on February 1, we have been identifying and connecting with individual clinical practices, worksites, child care centers, and community organizations (list of first year implementation sites on page 4). We have been encouraged by the excitement and engagement and are most grateful for everyone's ideas and feedback. This effort would not be possible without your many contributions.

Thank you for reading the BFREE e-Newsletter. We appreciate your enthusiasm for breastfeeding and dedication! Your thoughts, questions, suggestions and success stories are always welcome. Email them to us anytime at [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu).



Henry H. Bernstein, DO, MHCM, FAAP  
Principal Investigator

## FROM THE EXPERT

### VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTATION IN INFANTS: TO D OR NOT TO D?

Vitamin D plays a vital role in bone health. In severe cases of vitamin D deficiency in infants and children, rickets, defined as ineffective bone mineralization, may occur and lead to weak bones.

Vitamin D is made in the skin after exposure to sunlight or absorbed in the gut from one's diet. However, since parents are advised to avoid exposing infants to direct sunlight, babies receive most of their vitamin D through their diets. Current guidelines released by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in 2008 recommend a minimum daily intake of 400 international units (IU) of vitamin D for all infants and children. As breast milk and formula contain different amounts of vitamin D, what does this mean for babies who are breastfed, as well as those who are formula-fed?

Breastfeeding is the preferred form of infant feeding, and the AAP recommends exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months. Vitamin D supplementation is indicated in babies who are exclusively taking breast milk, because they do not receive adequate vitamin D through breast milk alone. However, the study "Adherence to Vitamin D Recommendations Among US Infants," published in the journal *Pediatrics* in April 2010, elucidated that **most** infants, not only those who are exclusively breastfed, require vitamin D supplementation to achieve the recommended 400 IU per day.

Standard infant formulas contain at least 400 IU of vitamin D per liter. However, unless an infant is taking at least 1 liter of formula per day, formula alone would not provide sufficient vitamin D. Conveniently, vitamin D supplements for infants are available as a liquid solution, providing the recommended dose of 400 IU in one milliliter or less.

Supplementation in exclusively or primarily breastfed infants should continue until the child is taking at least 1 liter of whole milk per day, which should not be introduced into the infant's diet until 12 months of age. Supplementation in formula-fed infants should continue until the child is taking at least 1 liter of either formula or whole milk per day, whichever comes first.



#### ANCHARA VIVEK, MD

Dr. Vivek is a junior faculty member in General Pediatrics at Cohen Children's Medical Center.

## MOTHER'S PERSPECTIVE:

### AN INVESTMENT THAT SAVES TIME

#### By: Penina Sipzner

With my first two children, exclusive breastfeeding went smoothly. They tended to wake up on their own every 2-3 hours and I rarely needed to wake them up for feeds. They both latched well and although I had a few plugged ducts, thankfully none ever turned into infections. Overall, I had no complaints; only positive feelings connected to special bonds with my daughter and son.

As soon as I saw my third baby, I fell in love and knew I would give her the best nutrition by nursing her for at least 1 year as I did my other babies. However, with this baby, it was different. Firstly, she was tired during the daytime and was more awake at night. I knew to feed her on cue, at least 8-12 times a day, but if I didn't wake her, she would have been happy to sleep through feeds and would not have received enough nutrition. Once she was awake, she would fall asleep after a few minutes of nursing. To keep her awake, I would have her undressed in skin to skin, rub her back, talk and sing loudly to her, massage my breast down to give her a mouthful of milk, and push her chin upward to keep her nursing. I made sure she was urinating 6-8 times a day and was stooling yellow stool. She went for weight checks weekly and was gaining each time. My Lactation Consultant instructed me that prolactin (milk-making hormone) levels are highest from 2AM-2PM, and I should try to pump once in the morning to boost my milk supply. This was also great because I was returning to work at 6 weeks and was able to stock pile milk in the freezer.

After the first 3 months, my daughter started waking up on her own and staying awake for full feeds almost every 3 hours. Trying to constantly wake her up when she was a newborn was hard work, but well worth the effort. She became great at breastfeeding, exclusively breastfed for six months, and continued to breastfeed until she was 15 months (never receiving any formula).

Usually the greatest things in life do not come easy. Determination, hard work, and patience are key in achieving them. I can proudly say that this breastfeeding experience (as well as my previous, easier ones) was a tremendous accomplishment for me. I feel very good about that.

*Penina is a registered dietitian at Cohen Children's Medical Center WIC Program.*



#### By: LoriAnn Mezzanotte

My first 40 days of breastfeeding were intense. The first time my baby went to breast, I fell in love and knew I would do whatever it took to nurse him. I was told in my pre-natal breastfeeding class and in the hospital that my baby needed to be fed 8-12 times a day and that I should feed on cue. They explained that my breasts never run out of milk and that the baby puts in his order for milk by removing milk. They told me my breasts are like the ice machine in my kitchen — just as I can keep going back for more ice, my baby could keep coming back to my breast for more milk.

I am a very scheduled person and expected my baby to eat every 2-3 hours, but my baby nursed more in clusters. Sometimes he nursed every hour, other times every 2, and then 1.5 hours in a row (marathon nursing). He was all over the place and it was difficult, but that only lasted the first month. I learned these cluster feeds were normal. I slept when my baby slept; some days sleeping from 8AM-12 noon. I was sure my baby was getting enough food because he was gaining weight when I went to the Pediatrician for weight checks, urinating and stooling, and I would hear him swallow as he nursed. I could also feel my breasts become less full after each feed as he came off the breast looking content.

After the first month, my baby became more scheduled and nursed every 3 hours. I felt wonderful knowing that my son was getting many benefits from my breast milk, which encouraged me to breastfeed exclusively for 6 months despite returning to work at 6 weeks. Between pumping and nursing, I breastfed my baby until he was 18 months old (never receiving any formula).

*LoriAnn is a registered dietitian and senior nutritionist at Cohen Children's Medical Center WIC Program.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**AUG 1-7** — World Breastfeeding Week. Theme: Sustaining Breastfeeding Together.

**AUG 4** — Global Big Latch On  
**@9:30-11:30AM**  
(Latch on @10:30AM)

- Brentwood: Office of Legislator M. Martinez (55 2nd St.)
- Hauppauge: Dennison Building Suffolk County Executive S. Bellone and Legislator L. Kennedy participating
- Setauket: Percy Raynor Park (Supported by Stony Brook)
- Riverhead: Riverhead County Center (Supported by Suffolk County/ County Clerk Office)

**AUG 5** — Global Big Latch On  
**@9:30-11:30AM**  
(Latch on @10:30AM)

- Copiague: Tanner Park
- Shirley: Smith Point Beach Park Legislators Calarco & Browning participating

Organized by the Maternal Infant Community Health Collaborative (MICHC). For more information, email [Ellen.Higgins@suffolkcountyny.gov](mailto:Ellen.Higgins@suffolkcountyny.gov)

**AUG 15** — Southside Hospital Baby Café® USA Opening **@1:30-3:30PM**  
For more information, email [WAndria@northwell.edu](mailto:WAndria@northwell.edu)

*Email [BFREE@northwell.edu](mailto:BFREE@northwell.edu) if you have an upcoming event you would like to share!*

# Thank you!

## TO OUR FIRST YEAR IMPLEMENTATION SITES

- Community Nazarene Church
- Glen Cove Day Care
- Glen Cove Family Medicine
- Glen Cove Hospital
- Glen Cove Library
- HRHCare Brentwood
- HRHCare Kraus
- HRHCare Martin Luther King Jr.
- Shinnecock Indian Nation Offices
- Small Blessings Day Care
- Southside Hospital
- Wuneechanunk Shinnecock Preschool

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