



## Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine

### For immediate release

Contact: Karla Shepard Rubinger, Executive Director, Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, (914) 740-2100, ext. 2153, [abm@bfmed.org](mailto:abm@bfmed.org)

## Strong Evidence Base for Benefits of Breastfeeding, According to Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine

New Rochelle, NY, March 19, 2009—Breastfeeding offers irrefutable and long-lasting health benefits for both mother and baby, which are supported by a comprehensive body of scientific research, including original articles and reviews such as those in ***Breastfeeding Medicine***, the peer-reviewed journal of the **Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM)**. The Academy is a global organization of physicians dedicated to the promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding through education, research, and advocacy ([www.bfmed.org](http://www.bfmed.org)).

According to leaders of the Academy, despite a sound scientific basis for the advantages of breastfeeding, dissenting opinions that aim to discredit breastfeeding, and question its relevance for women, receive exposure in the mass media such as the recent article in *The Atlantic*. Critics of breastfeeding do a disservice to new mothers around the world who seek the facts about the proven health benefits of breastfeeding as they often misrepresent the scientific findings and wrongly base global recommendations on the experiences and views of select groups of women.

Clinical and basic science research supports the role of breastfeeding in the development of a baby's immune system and the presence of maternal antibodies protect infants against infection. Artificial feeding is also associated with increased risk of common disorders of early childhood such as ear infections, asthma, skin disorders, digestive problems, and respiratory tract infections. Studies have also linked artificial feeding to increased risk for obesity, type 1 and 2 diabetes, childhood leukemia, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and necrotizing enterocolitis. Mothers benefit as well, and a history of breastfeeding has been associated with a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes and of breast and ovarian cancer.

With this growing body of evidence, and increasing support among health and medical professionals, breastfeeding rates in the U.S. are in fact on the rise. "But we are reminded as articles like this arise that misinformation abounds. Our goal is to continue to educate healthcare professionals to support mothers who understand the singular importance of breastfeeding and choose to do so," remarks **Caroline J. Chantry, MD**, President of the Academy.

"The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine encourages all women to make an informed choice when faced with the question of how to feed their infants based on strong, well-referenced scientific information. The data are compelling, scientific, and reinforced constantly. Breastfeeding for the new mother may not always be easy, but it is important and rewarding for both mother and infant," says **Ruth A. Lawrence, MD**, Editor-in-Chief of ***Breastfeeding Medicine***, from the Department of Pediatrics, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry.

The Academy promotes the development and dissemination of clinical practice guidelines and offers clinical protocols for the care of breastfeeding mothers and infants that are available on the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) National Guideline Clearinghouse website. The education of physicians and other healthcare professionals is the continuing goal of its Annual International Meeting; the 2009 Meeting will be held November 5-8 in Williamsburg, VA.

***Breastfeeding Medicine*** is an authoritative, peer-reviewed, multidisciplinary journal published quarterly. The journal publishes original scientific papers, reviews, and case studies on a broad spectrum of topics in lactation medicine. It presents evidence-based research advances and explores the immediate and long-term outcomes of breastfeeding, including the epidemiologic, physiologic, and psychological benefits of breastfeeding. The Academy's complete position statement appears on the Academy website ([www.bfmed.org](http://www.bfmed.org)).

**Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine.** 140 Huguenot St., New Rochelle, NY 10801-5215

[www.bfmed.org](http://www.bfmed.org)

Phone: (914) 740-2115 (800) 990-4ABM Fax: (914) 740-2101