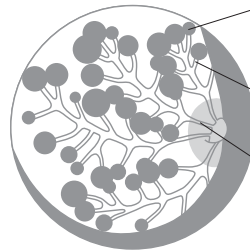


What makes breast milk so unique?

Surprise! The breast is an organ, too!

Your breasts can also be called mammary glands and they produce breast milk. Within each mammary gland, different parts play a role in making and transporting breast milk.



- ❶ Alveoli
This is where breast milk is made and stored. Alveoli are clusters of small grape-like sacs in your breast. They are surrounded by tiny muscles that squeeze them and push the milk out into the secondary milk ducts. Alveoli develop during your pregnancy¹.
- ❷ Secondary milk ducts
This complex network of small tubes carries milk from the alveoli to the main milk ducts¹.
- ❸ Main milk ducts
These are tubes that carry milk straight to your baby. You have an average of 9 of these main milk ducts in your nipple¹.

Breast milk is a living fluid

Breast milk is a living substance that changes to meet the growing needs and development of your child.



The power of colostrum

The precious colostrum and the milk you make in the first weeks are different from mature milk. Colostrum may not seem like a lot of volume, but it is jam-packed with ingredients and contains double the amount of protein than your later milk². These proteins protect your baby against diseases from the very beginning³.

Wow! The cells can change!

Breast milk contains live cells, like stem cells. These stem cells can be directed to become other body cell types such as bone, fat, liver and brain cells and may act as a type of "internal repair system"⁴. Isn't that amazing?

Your breast milk is what you eat

Breast milk has a flavor profile: The foods you eat during pregnancy and breastfeeding flavor the amniotic fluid and milk and may 'program' later food preferences of your baby⁵.



Pregnancy



Breastfeeding



After weaning

Breast milk is the most natural defense

When your baby is born, breast milk is your baby's first immunization to help fight disease and illness.



Thousands of ingredients

There is no substitute for breast milk. There are thousands of different ingredients in breast milk such as proteins, fats, lactose, vitamins, iron, minerals, water and enzymes. The vast majority of these ingredients cannot be replicated artificially⁶.

Just the fat your baby needs

Human milk is specifically designed for human babies. Your milk contains around 4% fat, while milk of seals and whales contains up to 50% fat! The fats in your milk are important for growth and development, and are even antibacterial³.

Over 130 prebiotics

Breast milk contains prebiotics, more than 130 complex sugars (oligosaccharides) that help protect the gut from different types of microbes. No other species has so many special sugars except perhaps the elephant^{6!}

Over 415 proteins

Many of the proteins in breast milk are active with functional roles! Some of these proteins can help to kill bacteria and others can identify pathogens. These immune proteins are guards that protect against microbes^{2, 3}.

Breast milk supports brain development

The brain is the fattest organ in the body! Brain mass almost doubles in the first 6 months and at 2 years of age it reaches more than 80% of adult size. Breast milk contains essential components for optimal development of the brain⁷.



Brain at birth
0.38 kg



Brain at 6 months
0.64 kg



Brain at 1 year
0.97 kg



Adult brain
1.25 kg

Breast milk: The ultimate all-in-one meal



Amazingly, your body produces the right nutrients in the right amount and the right volume of milk to match your baby's needs at all times. The more milk your baby receives, the better.

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