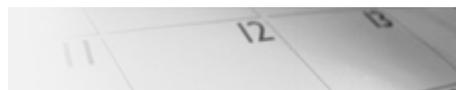


## This Week In Medicine



### Breastfeeding can reduce a child's risk of obesity

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ST. LOUIS (MD Consult) - Breastfeeding can reduce a child's risk of obesity, according to "Fight Fat Earlier" in the Feb. 9 *Newsweek*.

In a study published in the February *Pediatrics*, researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that among a group of 177,304 children, 4-year-olds who had nursed for at least one year were 28 percent less likely than peers to be overweight. Those who had nursed for three to six months lowered their risk by 19 percent.

One possibility for the difference is breast-fed babies learn to stop eating when they're full.

"When you're holding the bottle, and you've paid for it, there's a little more tendency to say, 'Finish the bottle,'" said University of Colorado pediatrician Marianne Neifert.

The good news is 70 percent of new moms are already breast-feeding. But only 20 percent nurse through their child's first birthday, as the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends. Mothers using formula shouldn't worry, though.

"Do whatever you can to protect your child against overweight now," said CDC epidemiologist Laurence M. Grummer-Strawn.

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