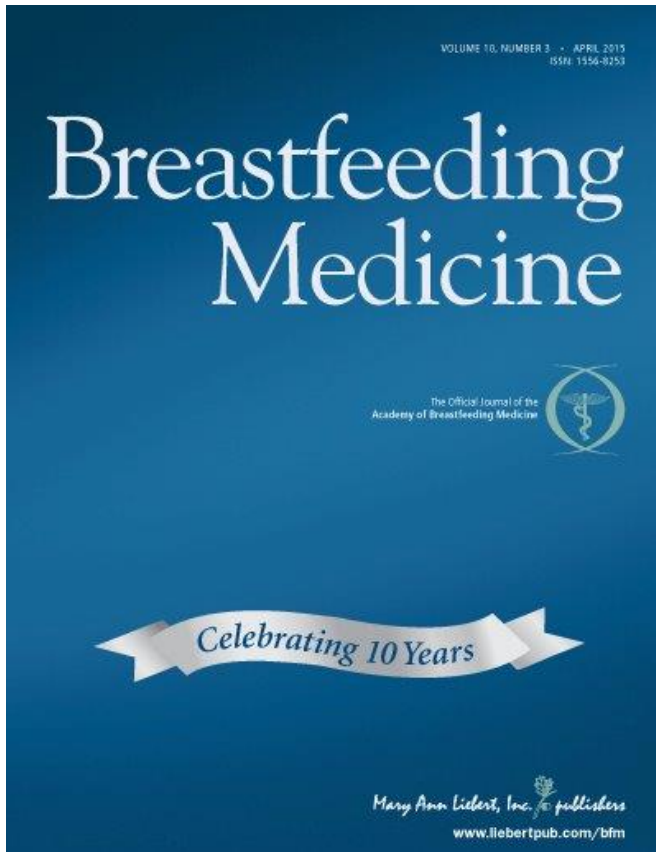


# Too few minority women breastfeed—can ob/gyns change their minds?

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Credit: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers

Obstetricians and gynecologists have a unique opportunity to educate and encourage minority women to nurse their infants to help reduce persistent racial and ethnic disparities in breastfeeding. As part of prenatal care, ob/gyns should promote the known health benefits of breastfeeding and help identify potential barriers their minority patients may face, according to an article in *Breastfeeding Medicine*.

Coauthors Katherine Jones, Michael Power, PhD, John Queenan, and Jay Schulkin, PhD, from the American College of Obstetricians and

Gynecologists, American University, and Georgetown University, Washington, DC, present data from a comprehensive literature review demonstrating lower rates of breastfeeding initiation and continuation for some racial and [ethnic groups](#) in the U.S. compared to White women. By understanding the cultural and social factors and the inadequacies of the healthcare system that may affect a minority woman's decision to breastfeed and her attitudes toward nursing, ob/gyns may be better able to help their patients overcome obstacles to nursing.

In the article "[Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Breastfeeding](#)," the authors provide information such as what programs and techniques can positively impact these rates and they urge ob/gyns to use these data to support breastfeeding in their clinical practices and in public policy.

"The persistent disparities cast shame on our healthcare system, a system that continues to short change that part of our population that is most in need of the benefits of breastfeeding," says Arthur I. Eidelman, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Breastfeeding Medicine*. "Hopefully clinicians will incorporate the information in this article into their daily activities and reverse this negative situation."

**More information:** The article is available free on the [Breastfeeding Medicine](#) website until May 14, 2015.

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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