

Receipt of breast milk increases with gestational age at birth

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(HealthDay)—Receipt of any breast milk varies with gestational age,

ranging from 71.3 percent of extremely preterm infants to 84.6 percent of term infants, according to research published in the June 7 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Katelyn V. Chiang, M.P.H., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed 2017 birth certificate data from 48 states and the District of Columbia for 3,194,873 infants to describe receipt of [breast milk](#) among extremely preterm, early preterm, late preterm, and term infants. Analyses were further stratified by maternal and infant characteristics.

The researchers found that the prevalence of infants receiving any breast milk was 83.9 percent overall and varied by [gestational age](#), with 71.3, 76.0, 77.3, and 84.6 percent of extremely preterm, early preterm, late preterm, and term infants, respectively, receiving any breast milk. Across gestational age groups, there were disparities in the receipt of breast milk by several sociodemographic factors, including maternal race/ethnicity.

"Hospital enactment and provision of evidence-based policies and practices that support breast milk feeding and donor milk access for all infants at high risk, as well as development of infant feeding policies and practices that promote breast milk feeding among mother-infant dyads facing challenges associated with extended infant hospitalizations, could help reduce gestational age disparities in the receipt of breast milk and increase the proportion of all infants receiving the benefits of breast milk," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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