

The History of Breastfeeding

The Siletz Clinic has a certified lactation counselor on staff during clinic hours.

As part of the Siletz Breastfeeding Circle, monthly articles will appear in *Siletz News* regarding the social, environmental, financial, and health benefits of breastfeeding.

Infants have been breastfed for thousands of years. Breastfeeding rates dropped during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Nestle (the chocolate company) manufactured and distributed its milk product throughout the U.S. and Europe in the 1870s. At the turn of the century, medical researchers also began making artificial milk. Breastfeeding no longer was the norm in America; infants could be either breastfed or bottle-fed.

Social Changes

In the 1930s, more babies were delivered in hospitals with nurseries and the advances in sterilization made it easy to bottle feed in the hospital and at home. The formulas improved. Even the word “formula” implies a scientific method of feeding. Eventually, mothers could make the formula at home when the mixing instructions were placed on the container.

The dairy industry grew rapidly in the 1940s, leaving a huge surplus of whey for the formula companies to use. This resulted in an exploding formula industry. Artificial milk soon became a status symbol for those who could afford it.

Facilitating Breastfeeding

In the 1940s, more and more women began “rooming-in,” which increased breastfeeding rates. In 1957, only 21 percent of babies discharged from hospitals were breastfed and this continued for the next 40 years.

During the ‘70s and ‘80s, the movement to deliver in birthing centers and at home began the promotion of natural methods over the overmedicated style of perinatal health care.

In 1978, the Carter administration appointed a committee to draft the first “Goals for the Nation.” One of these goals was to increase the incidence and duration of breastfeeding. This same year, on an international level, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF also began to address the need for protection and promotion of breastfeeding.

In 1980, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued statements strongly promoting breastfeeding.

In 1988, the Bush administration appointed a committee to develop national health goals for the year 2000. One of these was to increase the breastfeeding of newborns to 75 percent and to 50 percent for the first six months of life. America has fallen short of these goals. The goals for 2010 are similar.

The 10 steps listed below were put forth internationally by the WHO and UNICEF and became the cornerstone for “Baby Friendly Hospitals.”

1. Breastfeeding policies.
2. Train health care staff.
3. Educate pregnant women on the benefits of breastfeeding.
4. Help mothers start breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain milk supply.
6. Give newborns no food or drink other than breast milk unless medically indicated.
7. Rooming-in – mother and baby together 24 hours a day
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no artificial teats or pacifiers to breastfeeding infants.
10. Establish a breastfeeding support group.



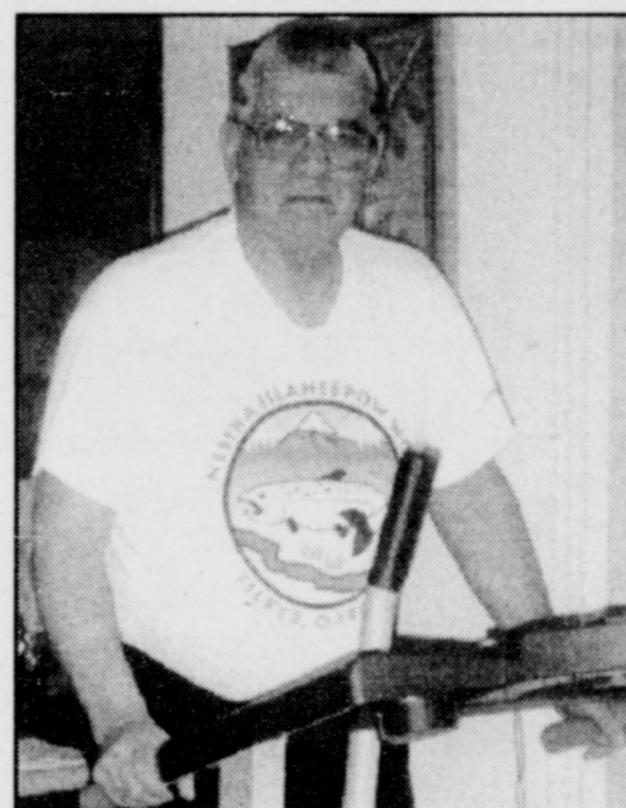
Next month’s article will include information on barriers to breastfeeding.

TPEP Presents Profiles on Quitting Junior’s Story

by Junior John

My name is Junior John. I started smoking when I was 13 or 14 years old. I guess I thought it was a big deal to smoke because everybody else was smoking too. One time Dad said, “You’re going to burn our house down one of these days,” so I started smoking in front of Mom and him. I was 18 years old then.

I moved to California in 1955 and smoked there for 26 years. I moved back to Salem in 1981 and went to work for a cannery. I had a job washing machines at break times and lunch times. My cigarettes got all wet one day, so I quit smoking for about six months.



My first grandson was born in January 1991, so I quit smoking again and haven’t smoked for 11 years. I am 69 years old and have been married to Jane for 47 years. I quit cold turkey.

TPEP note: If you would like to share your story, please contact the Tobacco Prevention & Education Program at 541-444-1030 or 1-800-648-0449. What you share can make a difference in someone else’s life. Thank you.

The Siletz Breastfeeding Circle

Promoting and Protecting Breastfeeding

2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

Housing Department Conference Room

Food and drink provided

For more information, contact Laura Duarte or Barbara Danna,
RN, at 541-444-9659 or 1-800-648-0449, ext. 659.

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