



Barriers to Breastfeeding

Several attempts were made during the 1980s to identify and reduce the barriers that keep women from beginning and continuing to breastfeed their babies. In 1990, the National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health identified the following barriers:

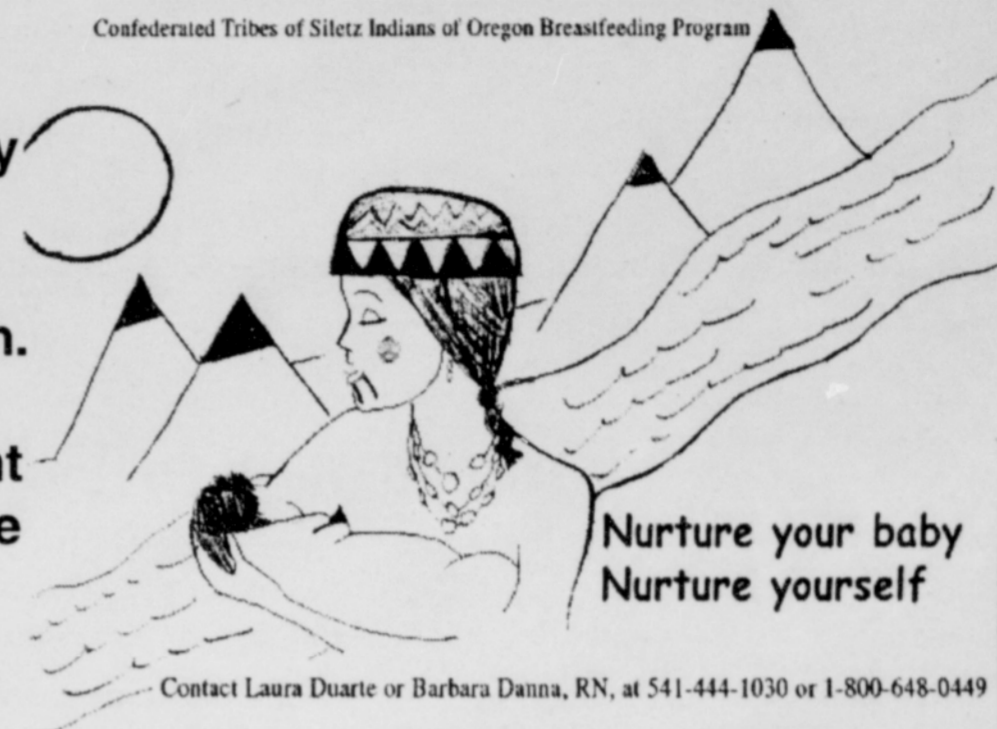
- 1) Education of our professionals – The lack of professional education regarding breastfeeding continues to be a barrier. When professionals fail to provide support, give poor advice, or lack knowledge about breastfeeding and lactation management, or when knowledgeable skilled clinicians are inaccessible, the barriers to initiating or continuing breastfeeding remain in place.
- 2) Public education – specifically, women’s attitudes and societal attitudes are barriers to breastfeeding. Women’s attitudes about modesty, embarrassment, loss of independence, lack of confidence, concerns that their milk supply is inadequate, and problems with breastfeeding previous infants add to the barriers to breastfeeding. These misconceptions are likely to result from a lack of accurate information. Breastfeeding is not accepted as the norm and the general lack of support by society adds to the barriers.
- 3) Support in the health care system – The United States National Breastfeeding Committee was formed in January 1998. Its goal is to facilitate a national breastfeeding policy. It is believed that until there is a national policy supporting breastfeeding, there will never be consistent education for providers and the public.
 - ♦ The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) has increased breastfeeding rates among its clients at a higher rate than the general population. Unlike other health organizations that have added to the barriers, WIC has actively facilitated breastfeeding.
 - ♦ Lack of postpartum services has been and continues to be a barrier to breastfeeding. In Lincoln County, breastfeeding coordinators are available at hospitals and home health nurses visit mothers and babies the first week they’re at home to help with any breastfeeding problems that may occur. The Siletz Tribe has two certified lactation counselors on staff.
- 4) Support services in the community – Surveys conducted by the Surgeon General’s Office in the 1980s showed that factors influencing breastfeeding rates include lack of support from family and friends, and lack of role models who breastfeed. Most women of childbearing age were born to mothers during the 1960s and 1970s, when American culture strongly supported bottle-feeding. There’s a strong correlation that mothers who were breastfed are more likely to breastfeed their own children. Lack of postpartum support also has been a problem. As mentioned above, many postpartum breastfeeding programs are available in Lincoln County.
- 5) Support in the work place – As shown in the Surgeon General’s national survey, returning to work and school are the most frequent barriers to breastfeeding. Lack of support, embarrassment, the stress of transition to parenthood, and the lack of information about how to maintain a milk supply while separated from the infant also contribute.
- 6) Research – Formula companies have done research on the ingredients of their formulas, always trying to create a product that’s similar to human milk. But it’s only been in the last 20 years that research regarding the effects of formulas on infants, and later adults, as been done. It’s now clear that infants who are breastfed are healthier children and adults.

The goal of the Siletz Tribal Breastfeeding Program is to respectfully educate and encourage families to breastfeed. Watch for articles each month in *Siletz News*.

Moms and Babies Breastfeeding Circle

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon Breastfeeding Program

2nd Tuesday
of each
month
6 - 7:30 p.m.
Housing
Department
Conference
Room



Nurture your baby
Nurture yourself

Contact Laura Duarte or Barbara Danna, RN, at 541-444-1030 or 1-800-648-0449

**You’re invited to come eat, visit, and learn
about the many benefits of breastfeeding.**

Sponsored by Siletz Tribal Diabetes Grant

Clinic has Immunization for Cancer!

by Dr. Rick Morgan

What’s the only cancer that can be immunized against? What sexually transmitted disease can be prevented by immunization? If you answered hepatitis B, you answered both questions correctly.

Oregon has a high percent of residents who test positive for hepatitis C. This type of hepatitis has a higher-than-normal risk for developing into liver cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma), especially if the patient also has hepatitis B. These diseases are spread through any activity that may result in blood or body fluid exposure – needle drug use, nasal snorting of drugs, sex, or blood transfusions received before screening was done (1992).

The Siletz Clinic is trying to screen all hepatitis C patients and their families for hep B and hep A, and immunize them to prevent dual infection. SCHC also is screening for alpha fetoprotein (AFP), a blood protein that is increased in patients with liver cancer. If someone you know has hepatitis C and hasn’t had these tests, please contact the clinic for an appointment.

If patients already have hepatitis C (formally called “non A non B hepatitis”), several things can be done to lessen complications and improve quality of life. Most important is to **not** drink alcohol or use other liver-damaging substances. Many treatment centers won’t offer treatment if the patient is drinking or has consumed alcohol within the past six or 12 months.

Learn all you can about the liver and hepatitis. One good resource is the Alaska Native Tribal Health Center’s Web site – www.ANTHC.org/hep – that teaches patients and their families about treatment options, potential treatment complications, and ways to cope with them.

The Siletz Clinic has a hepatitis C registry much like the diabetic registry that we use to track patients’ care and offer new treatments as they become available. If you or anyone you know has hepatitis, please have them contact the clinic to be sure they are on our registry and have had all the tests and available treatments.

Any questions raised by this article can be addressed to me, Dr. Rick Morgan, at the Siletz Clinic, 541- 444-1030 or 1-800-648-0449.