



Pharmacy Notice

by Derris Hurley, RPh

Because of new federal regulations, written authorization is required when requesting someone else to pick up prescription medication for you. Authorization forms are available at the clinic.

Tooth Talk

by Linda Kreutzer, RDH

Thumb Sucking – Is it a Problem for Kids?

Thumb sucking is a normal desire and need for infants. During the first one or two years of life, it shouldn't be discouraged.

Thumb sucking and pacifier use give children a sense of security and help them become more comfortable with their environment. Tired, stressed, or hungry children are more likely to suck their thumbs.

Most children quit sucking their thumbs and fingers all by themselves between the ages of 2 and 4. This occurs in approximately 85 percent to 90 percent of children. Sucking often lessens gradually during this period as children spend more of their waking hours exploring their surroundings. So for **most** children, prolonged thumb sucking is not a problem.

Problems can occur for the other 10 percent to 15 percent of children who continue to suck their thumbs at age 3 and 4. If thumb sucking continues into this age group, it may be time to help wean your child away from this.

Make an appointment for your child to visit the dentist about this. This habit becomes a concern when permanent teeth are getting ready to come in or in some cases, the roof of the mouth (palate) can become permanently deformed. Speech problems, including the development of a lisp, can occur.

Your dentist can determine if these problems are occurring and can offer suggestions to help your child break this habit. Your dentist may suggest treatments for thumb sucking, including bitter nail solutions or providing your child with a special thumb guard. This is a clear plastic thumb covering that straps to the child's hand. When it's in place, it doesn't allow the child to form a suction. This allows no comfort in the activity and the child gradually loses interest. Of course, all treatments must be accompanied by large doses of positive parental reinforcement.

If it's time to stop, a positive approach is always best. Punishing children increases their desire for security and drives them back to the habit. Negative reinforcement can work in the opposite direction, making children feel more anxious and needing the comfort of thumb sucking.

Children can't be expected to stop instantly. It may take a long time. Being consistent is important. Help your child quit by giving him/her a teddy bear, a blanket, or just lots of affection.

If they're still having a hard time beating the habit, try gradually increasing the number of hours in which they're not allowed to use the pacifier or suck their thumb. You should continue increasing the number of hours until they've been weaned of the habit.

Phase out bedtime pacifier use **last**, as this is the time they need it most. Try using rewards to encourage children to stop. The younger the child, the more frequently the reward must be given. Many children need a number of small rewards before they lose the impulse to suck their thumbs.

A child's first days of attempting to quit sucking his/her thumb will be difficult. Like all habits, the yearning diminishes slowly and eventually becomes easier. Parents and other family members can offer encouragement and rewards. Family members need to be patient. It may take several attempts before the habit is completely broken.

Breastfeeding Program Reaches Six-Month Mark

by Barbara Danna, RN, BS, CLC

Babies who are solely breastfed (no formula) during their first year are healthier infants, children, and adults. They have a lower risk for diabetes and other childhood and adult diseases. As part of the Diabetes Program at the Siletz Clinic, the Breastfeeding Program was created to **respectfully** encourage, educate, and support breastfeeding in the tribal community.

It's been six months since the Breastfeeding Program began. One of our activities is a breastfeeding circle on the second Tuesday of each month at the Siletz Housing Department conference room. This is a wonderful time for breastfeeding moms and expecting mothers to support each other, enjoy a meal, and receive breastfeeding education.

I'm a certified lactation counselor and am available at the Siletz Clinic before and after delivery for assistance with any breastfeeding concerns.

The most common breastfeeding problems are poor positioning of the baby and incorrect latching, which can cause sore nipples. Moms also need to nurse more often when breast milk first comes to establish an abundant milk supply and prevent engorgement.

Moms learn all these things in the hospital, but sometimes life can be overwhelming when mom first gets home. Many tricks are available that can help mothers and babies feel successful and enjoy their breastfeeding time.

The Breastfeeding Program also supplies high-quality breast pumps so moms can leave a supply of breast milk at home for later use in a bottle. Women are returning to work and pumping their breast on breaks and lunch hours. Pumping takes only 10 minutes and breast milk can be stored/frozen for up to six months.

We also do home visits – days, nights, and weekends. When a mom and a baby need help feeding/eating, they need it now.

We're very excited with how well the program is going. News is traveling in *Siletz News* and by word of mouth. The number of women who are breastfeeding their babies is growing monthly. It's as though once women learned that there is help for them and their babies at the clinic, that was all they needed to hear. They're calling with questions and what they need help with is usually something small.

Moms instinctively do everything correct with their breastfeeding. They simply need a little support – someone to say that mom and baby are doing great. You don't have to be a registered nurse to give support. All of us can encourage and support breastfeeding in our families and community.

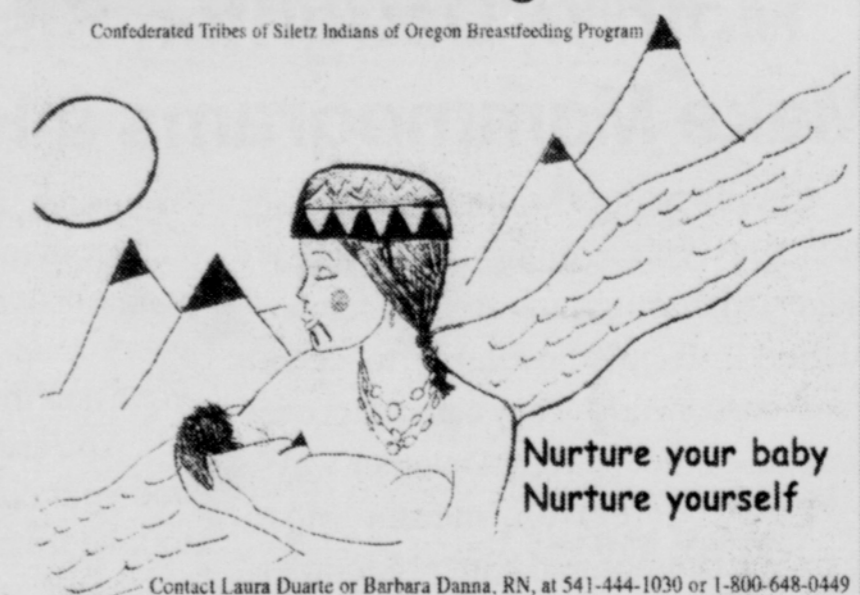
Women are intelligent and when educated, can make informed decisions on breastfeeding their children. Please continue to look for monthly articles on breastfeeding in *Siletz News*.

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

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



Nurture your baby
Nurture yourself

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

Sponsored by Siletz Tribal Diabetes Grant