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Mother & Childcare

For professionals

Information folder

Help mothers to give their babies the best start in life during World Breastfeeding Week 2017 and beyond

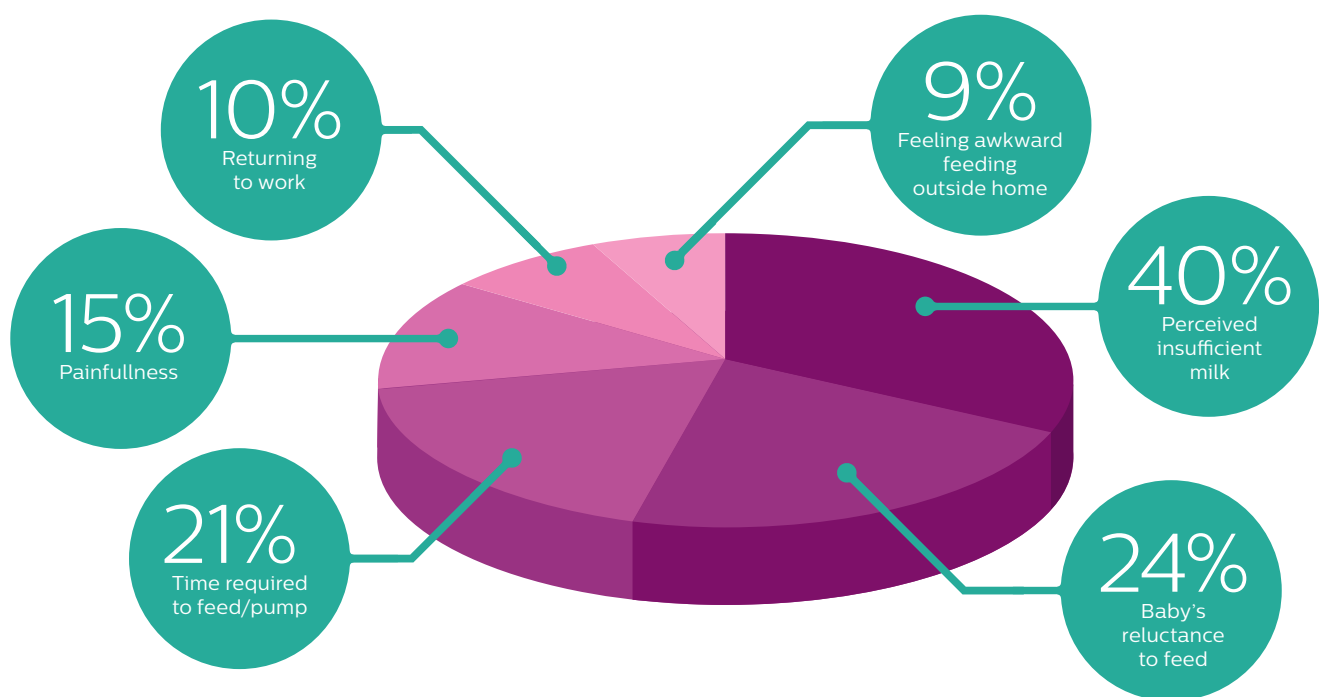
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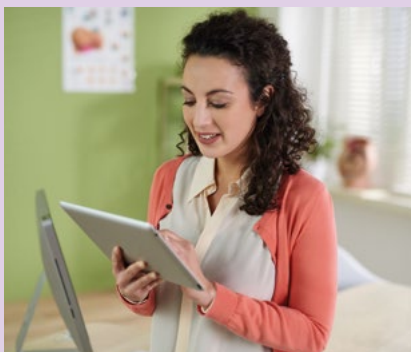
Many women stop breastfeeding earlier than they want to

Breast milk provides babies with all the nutrients needed for healthy development. The World Health Organization recommends exclusive breastfeeding up to 6 months of age.¹ However, despite 90–95% of pregnant women intending to breastfeed their babies, more than 40% do not breastfeed beyond 6 months²

Reasons women stop breastfeeding²



Up to 60% of women who breastfeed stop earlier than they want to^{2,3}



Supportive discussions

Breastfeeding is natural, but mothers need support to establish and sustain it.⁴ New mothers can feel disappointed if their expectations do not match the reality of breastfeeding, yet they may be reluctant to ask for support.

Women who seek advice from healthcare professionals are more likely to continue breastfeeding for longer.

- Almost 70% of women who breastfeed for 7–12 months have access to a lactation consultant, compared with only around 55% of those who stop breastfeeding within 3 months²



Helping mothers to relax can help them breastfeed for longer

Almost 50% of mothers who stop breastfeeding within 8 months do so because they feel that they do not have enough milk.^{2,5}

Milk volume and flow are closely linked to a mother’s psychological well-being and stress levels.^{6–8} Helping mothers to understand that breastfeeding, or expressing milk, in a calm environment with a home-like atmosphere, can enhance their breastfeeding experience,⁹ and allow them to continue for longer.

In a study carried out by Philips Avent, mothers expressed significantly more milk after 10–15 minutes of doing a breathing exercise or listening to music.¹⁰

Getting the balance right can be tough

- Almost one in ten women stop breastfeeding because they feel uncomfortable feeding outside the home²
- Almost 15% of mothers in the US³ and the UK² stop breastfeeding on returning to work

Offering women practical support, such as advice about expressing milk and dedicated breastfeeding spaces, can help women breastfeed for longer.¹¹

Breastfeeding tips



Offering mothers practical tips to help with their feeding routine may help:

- Encourage women to find a calm, relaxing space with a home-like atmosphere in which to breastfeed or express milk⁹
- Offer advice to women about how to maintain lactation even if they are separated from their babies¹²
- Provide information on any breastfeeding support groups or lactation courses available¹²
- Provide support to women who wish to continue expressing milk for their babies

All these practical tips can help women to meet their breastfeeding goals and breastfeed for longer. Please find enclosed a leaflet to support you in providing advice to mothers and parents on tips for breastfeeding for longer.



References:
1. World Health Organization, United Nations Children's Fund. Global strategy for infant and young child feeding. http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/global_strategy/en/; Published 2002; accessed June 2016. 2. De Jager M, et al. *Eur Obstet Gyn Suppl* 2012;25-30. http://www.newscenter.philips.com/pwc_nrc/main/shared/assets/es/Downloadablefile/breastfeeding/breastfeeding.pdf; accessed June 2016. 3. Odom EC, et al. *Pediatrics* 2013;131:e726. 4. WHO. http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/exclusive_breastfeeding/en; accessed January 2014. 5. Li R, et al. *Pediatrics* 2008;121:569-576. 6. Lau C. *Pediatr Clin North Am* 2001;48:221-234. 7. Newton M, et al. *J Pediatr* 1948;33:698-704. 8. Ueda T, et al. *Obstet Gynecol* 1994;84:259-262. 9. Hauck YL, et al. *Int Breastfeed J* 2008;3:20. 10. Philips Avent Relaxation Study. Data on file. 11. Iellamo A, et al. *J Hum Lact* 2015;31:36-39. 12. WHO Evidence for the ten steps to successful breastfeeding. 1998; available at: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/43633/1/9241591544_eng.pdf