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Breast feeding as seen by Islam.

PIP: Islamic law requires mothers to breast feed their children for 2 years. the father must assist the mother in breast feeding the children by providing her with food and clothing. If the father dies or does not live at home, the heir must support the mother thereby allowing her to breast feed her infants. A wet nurse can feed a child only if the mother's milk is not available. Allah recognizes that breast milk is the most wholesome food source for infants. It is made daily based on the infant's needs for growing and nourishment, while other milks and/or formulas remain the same regardless of the infant's daily requirements. For example, the 1st milk, a small amount of yellowish colostrum, contains protein, minerals, and antibodies. Colostrum also acts as a laxative. Breast milk is also comprised of enzymes which make breast milk easy to digest. These digestive enzymes also destroy any microorganisms in the stomach that may have entered thereby providing extra protection against disease. Further, breast milk is sterile. Infant mortality rates (IMRs) among breast fed infants are 4 time lower than IMRs of artificially fed infants. In addition, breast feeding establishes a strong bond between mother and child in which the child feels happiness and security. Breast feeding also benefits the mother. The uterus of a breast feeding mother fully contracts to its original size, while the uterus of a mother who does not breast feed does not. Further, breast feeding women are less prone to breast cancer than those women who have never breast fed. In addition, the more a women breast feeds the less likely she is to get breast cancer. Breast feeding also acts to a certain degree as a contraceptive.

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