Breastfeeding your baby offers many benefits. Research shows that breastfeeding and/or pumping may also reduce the symptoms of certain medical problems. Moms who are at an unhealthy weight have an increased risk for certain medical problems such as:

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Complications from C-section
- Gestational diabetes (Diabetes during pregnancy)
- Anemia (Low amount of red blood cells in your blood)

**HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE:** You can still breastfeed your baby when you have high blood pressure. Breastfeeding can help you lose weight and losing weight is a good way to help reduce high blood pressure. If you need to be on medication to control your blood pressure, make sure your doctor knows you are breastfeeding. Your doctor will give you safe high blood pressure drugs to take while breastfeeding. Contact your doctor for more information.

**DIABETES:** You can still breastfeed your baby if you have diabetes. Make sure you follow-up with your doctor to receive the proper care. Your diabetes may be treated with diet or medication. Your doctor will decide what is right for you. Remind your doctor that you are breastfeeding if you are going to be on medication. For many women who are at an unhealthy weight, especially those with diabetes, there may be a delay in milk “let-down” (milk coming out).

**There are things you can do to help with milk let-down (milk coming out):**
- Practice skin-to-skin contact
- Express colostrum until the amount of milk increases
- Get sleep and rest.
- Contact your doctor if you need help managing your diabetes while breastfeeding.
ANEMIA (Low amount of red blood cells): Some pregnant women develop anemia during pregnancy. Symptoms of anemia can include headaches, dizziness, and feeling very tired. If you feel weak do not carry your baby alone. If you have anemia, you can still breastfeed your baby. Your doctor can help you manage your anemia. They may recommend taking iron supplements. Be sure to contact your doctor before starting iron supplements. All breastfeeding mothers should include iron in their diet. Refer to the Iron Needs after Pregnancy module in the Nutrition section for more information about iron-rich foods to improve anemia.

BLOOD CLOTS: Larger women are more likely to have a C-section birth. The risk of blood clots after surgery is highest in larger women. The risk of blood clots remains higher than normal for at least 12 weeks after women deliver babies.

DEPRESSION: Maternal depression can affect any mom. Women who are at an unhealthy weight tend to have higher rates of depression and anxiety. These mental health issues may make it more difficult to breastfeed. Remember, you are not alone! Talk to your doctor.

Some medical conditions won’t prevent you from breastfeeding. Talk to your doctor for more guidance. Make sure to always get follow-up care for your medical conditions.

The health care law, (Affordable Care Act) requires most health insurance plans to provide breastfeeding equipment and counseling for pregnant and nursing women. You may be covered for a breast pump and visits with a lactation consultant through your medical insurance plan, WIC, or Medi-Cal. Contact your insurance plan for questions about your breastfeeding benefits.

APPs:
LACTMED
itunes.apple.com/us/app/lactmed/id441969514?mt=8

BLOGS:
STORING BREASTMILK BAGS
kellymom.com/category/blog-post/
thebreastfeedingmother.blogspot.com/
REFERENCES