

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Issues Draft Recommendation on Primary Care Interventions to Support Breastfeeding

Evidence shows interventions are effective in increasing the initiation and duration of breastfeeding

WASHINGTON, D.C. – April 26, 2016 – The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) today posted a draft recommendation statement on primary care interventions to support breastfeeding. The Task Force recommends interventions during pregnancy and after birth to support breastfeeding. This is a **B recommendation**.

The Task Force is providing an opportunity for public comment on this draft recommendation statement and the companion draft evidence review until May 23, 2016. All comments will be considered as the Task Force develops its final recommendation and final evidence review.

Breastfeeding has a number of health benefits for both the mother and the infant. Babies who are breastfed are less likely to get infections such as ear infections, or to develop chronic conditions such as asthma, obesity, and diabetes. For mothers, breastfeeding is associated with a lower risk of breast and ovarian cancer and type 2 diabetes.

“Breastfeeding has proven health benefits for both the mother and the baby, and new mothers often need support for breastfeeding to be successful. The Task Force found that primary care interventions to support breastfeeding can effectively increase the number of mothers who choose to breastfeed and how long they breastfeed their babies,” says Task Force member Ann E. Kurth, Ph.D., R.N.

Effective primary care interventions include education about breastfeeding for pregnant women and their families, and breastfeeding assistance and support for new mothers by professionals or other mothers.

The Task Force recognizes that breastfeeding is not the right choice for every mother and suggests that clinicians should be mindful of this when implementing interventions to support breastfeeding.

The Task Force’s draft recommendation statement has been posted for public comment on the Task Force Web site at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org. Comments can be submitted from April 26 through May 23, 2016 at <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Name/us-preventive-services-task-force-opportunities-for-public-comment>.

The Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine that works to improve the health of all Americans by making evidence-based recommendations about clinical preventive services such as screenings, counseling services, and preventive medications.

Grades in this recommendation:

B: Recommended.

[Learn more here](#)

Dr. Kurth is dean of the Yale School of Nursing. She is also an adjunct professor in the New York University College of Nursing and the College of Global Public Health. Dr. Kurth is a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and the New York Academy of Medicine and an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine (formerly the Institute of Medicine). Dr. Kurth is a clinically-trained epidemiologist who studies approaches to improving HIV and sexually transmitted infection prevention, screening, and care; reproductive health; and global health workforce/system strengthening efforts.

Contact: USPSTF Media Coordinator at Newsroom@USPSTF.net / (202) 572 -2044