
PROVIDER BULLETIN

Breastfeeding Benefits All Infants



The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends infants breastfeed exclusively for the first 6 months of life. Research shows that breastfeeding brings many benefits to both infant and mother—breastfeeding boosts the immune system, helps prevent chronic disease, aids in growth and development, and helps bonding between mother and child. There is also growing evidence that supports breastfeeding as an effective strategy to prevent childhood obesity.

Please be aware that infant formula samples, coupons, and materials (educational brochures, gifts, etc.) with formula company logos **should not** be distributed to pregnant and post-partum Medi-Cal patients (MMCD policy letter 98-10).

Coupons, samples, and educational materials provided by formula companies can be misinterpreted by the member as an endorsement of these formula products by the health plan, hospital, and/or physician and may lead to early termination of breastfeeding.

Thank you for continuing to promote breastfeeding to your patients. For more information on the available classes and programs, or to obtain health education materials on breastfeeding, call PIPA at (818)265-0800, x232.

WIC-Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, & Children

As a reminder, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program offers free services to the following:

- Pregnant, breastfeeding, and post-partum women;
- Children under 5 years old (including foster children);
- Families with a low to moderate income. Working families may qualify.

The state requires that providers refer all Medi-Cal eligible pregnant and breastfeeding members to the WIC program. To refer a patient, write the required health information on a WIC referral form, in a prenatal booklet or on a prescription pad. Instruct your patient to call WIC at **1-888-942-2229** for more information. Your patient will be referred to the WIC agency that best fits his or her needs.