

# Memorial Hospital and Manor

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:***  
***Breastfeeding Week***

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## The Road to Lifelong Health Begins with Breastfeeding

World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated every year from August 1 – 7 in more than 170 countries to encourage breastfeeding and improve the health of babies around the world. During Breastfeeding Week, Memorial Hospital and Manor encourages mothers to give their babies the best start possible by exclusively breastfeeding. Breast milk is the greatest gift you can give your newborn.

Malnutrition plagues numerous developing countries; however, rates of obesity are at an all-time high in many developed countries, especially in the United States and Mexico. The health and nutritional status of mothers and infants are directly linked, making appropriate infant feeding a critical first step in preventing a variety of other medical conditions.

Research shows that infants who are not exclusively breastfed for their first six months of life are also more likely to develop a wide range of chronic and acute diseases and conditions including ear infections, diarrheal diseases, asthma and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). In addition, mothers who do not breastfeed are at an increased risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer.

One of the best preventive measures a mother can take to protect her infant's health is to breastfeed. However, in the United States, only 15% of babies are exclusively breastfed in the

first 6 months, even though 75% start out being breastfed. Rates are significantly lower for African-American infants.

The success rate among mothers who want to breastfeed can be greatly improved through active support from their families, friends, communities, clinicians, health care leaders, employers, and policymakers. Given the importance of breastfeeding for the health and well-being of mothers and children, it is critical that we take action across the country to support breastfeeding.

Memorial Hospital and Manor will host a Women's Health and Pregnancy Planning program and Open House on Tuesday, August 7, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the Kirbo Women's Center classroom for anyone planning a pregnancy or who may have questions about their gynecological needs. Dr. Jason Moye, Dr. Mandy Moye, and Dr. Don Robinson will be guest speakers. Refreshments will be served and door prizes will be given. Breastfeeding information and other educational resources will be available. Everyone is invited to attend.

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