

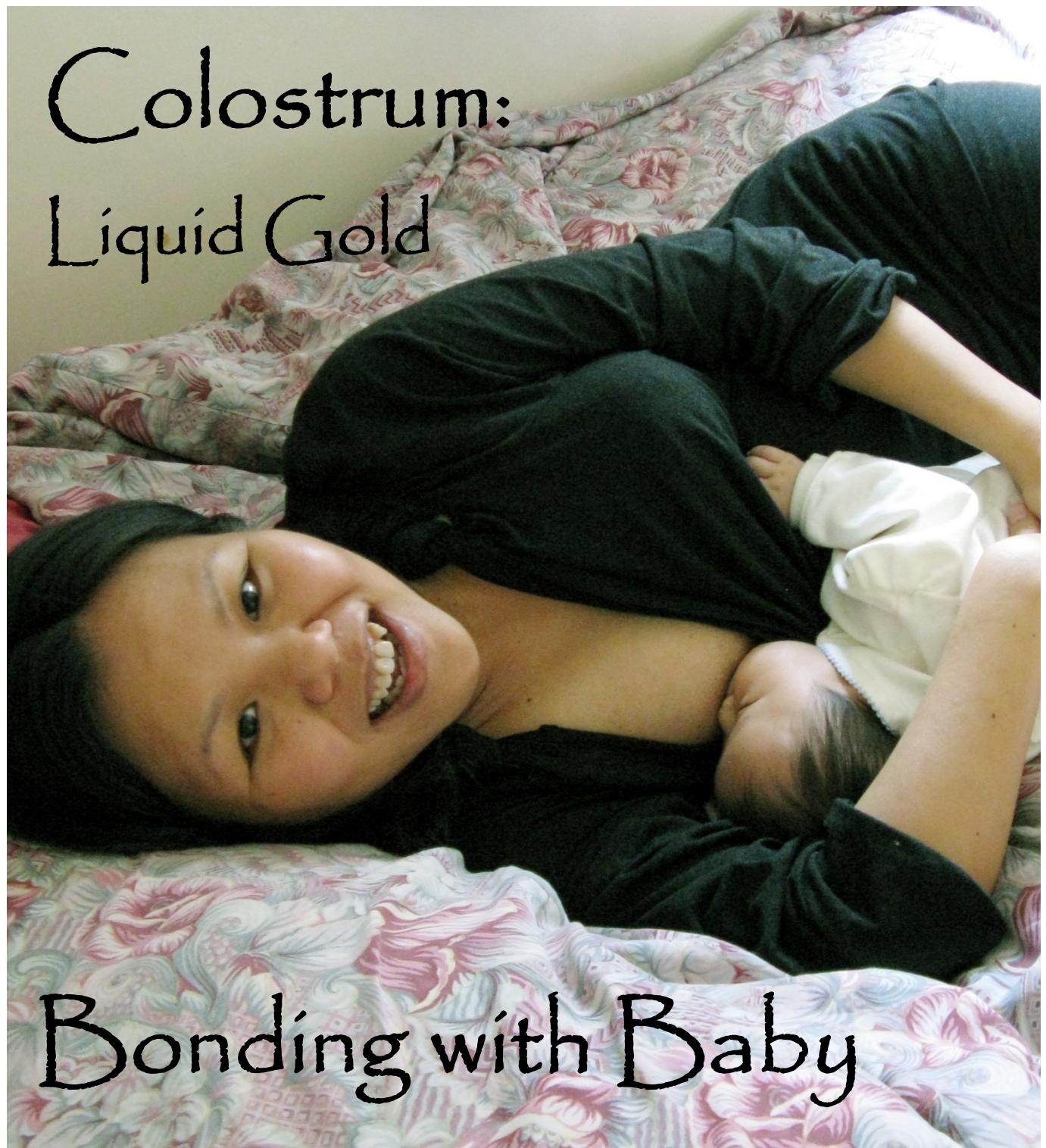
Close
to
the
Heart



La Leche League Asia
Mid-Year 2008
Volume 9, Number 2

"Breastfeeding
is mothering
close to the heart"

Colostrum: Liquid Gold



Bonding with Baby

Close to the Heart



"Breastfeeding
is mothering
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La Leche League Asia

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La Leche League International
fully supports the WHO (World
Health Organisation) International
Code of Marketing of Breast Milk
Substitutes. LLLI Board of
Directors, (1981,1988,1993).

Cost of regular membership in the
USA is US\$40. Cost of
membership varies in other
countries.

Visit our web-site:
<http://www.lalecheleague.org>

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Cover Photo: Miranda Yip with Yu Sung

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Mission Statement

La Leche League International is a non-profit, non-sectarian, organization. Our mission is to help mothers worldwide to breastfeed through mother-to-mother support, encouragement, information, and education and to promote a better understanding of breastfeeding as an important element in the healthy development of the baby and mother. All breastfeeding mothers, as well as future breastfeeding mothers, are welcome to come to our meetings or to call our Leaders for breastfeeding help.

Contribution

Deadlines

Contributions received by 1st Nov. 2008 will be included in the Late-Year 2008 issue.

Contributions received by 1st March 2009 will be included in the Early-Year 2009 issue.

Contributions received by 1st July 2009 will be included in the Mid-Year 2009 issue.

Article and stories for Close to the Heart are accepted at all times.

Close to the Heart
Is a bilingual newsletter (English and Chinese) for breastfeeding mothers in Asia.

Contributions in English can be directed to:
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If you have a story you'd like to share, please let me know! Even if you're not a writer, you can tell your story and have it written by someone else. Contributions may be edited for clarity and in order to fit into the space available. They may also be published in other LLL publications

Editor's Corner

As I write...

Hong Kong and mainland China are gearing up with huge excitement for the Summer Olympics, which will be held in China from 8 – 24th August, 2008. Around the same time, breastfeeding advocates have their own celebrations as World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is held from 1st to 7th August. The theme for WBW this year is "Mother Support: Going for the Gold." With this theme, the WBW organisers are calling for increased support for mothers in achieving the gold standard of infant feeding: **breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months, and continued breastfeeding together with other complimentary foods for up to two years and beyond.**

A mother's need for support is not unlike the needs of an Olympic athlete. Mothers and athletes will perform better if they have good support from family, friends, the community, and the government.

Likewise, both an athlete and a new mother may face challenges along the way. For a breastfeeding mother this may include overcoming misinformation, breastfeeding while working outside the home, and perhaps overcoming doubts about her inability to breastfeed her baby.

We hope that La Leche League can be one link in the chain of support. And as your babies grow, you will pass on all that you've learnt to your friends and family... and later to your children as they become parents.

If you would like to find out more about events being held to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week check out www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org.

Meanwhile I hope you enjoy this issue of *Close to the Heart* and if you would like to contribute an article, please do get in touch, we would love to hear from you.

Wishing you all a happy summer,

Maggie

Bonding with Baby: One mother's path to joyful breastfeeding

When I was pregnant, it never once occurred to me that I might have a problem with breastfeeding. Like most expectant mothers, I was entirely focused on getting through the pain of labour and delivery. I read that breastfeeding could take some time to establish, but didn't really know what that meant and never imagined how difficult it could be. Well, two weeks after my baby daughter was born, I was tormented by what I thought was my first failure as a mother.

My daughter was born healthy at three kilograms. But the day she was born, it was obvious that we were going to have a hard time nursing. She just couldn't latch on. While in the hospital, midwives, nurses, all of them tried encouraging her by pushing her tiny head toward my breast, only to have her suck a few times and then slide off. The attempts would end with her crying and frustrated, and with me feeling distraught and hopeless – it was heartbreaking. Three days after she was born, she had lost seven percent of her body weight, and the doctor suggested giving her formula in a bottle. I was

hesitant because I wanted to avoid nipple confusion, but we ultimately relented.



Eye with her daughter

During the hospital stay, I tried everything. Nipple shields seemed to work – at least she sucked on them, but they were incredibly painful. I tried to overcome the pain, but when my nipples started to bleed, I had to give up on them. I started to pump and feed her by bottle. After we went home, we tried various alternatives to eliminate the bottle. I tried feeding her by syringe. I also had a consultant come in and try to help my baby latch-on. We spent four sessions bringing her head to my breast, trying to get her interested, but she just wouldn't suck. On the contrary, when she got to the breast she would cry and kick. I felt like it was torture for her.

Desperate, I called La Leche League and invited an LLL Leader to my home one evening. She observed us as we tried to breastfeed.

She watched my baby try to latch on, kick, cry and then reject the breast. We considered some possible reasons for my baby's failure to latch on, but she didn't want to draw any conclusions until she conferred with some experts.

The LLL Leader was primarily concerned with the fact that each time I brought my baby close to my breast, she would kick and cry. She consulted Dr. Christina Smillie in the U.S., a physician who believes that all babies – human and animal – are programmed to breastfeed, and that they would latch on by themselves with time. After hearing my situation, Dr. Smillie surmised that my baby had developed an aversion to the breast after so many weeks of intense and forced attempts to get her to latch on. She suggested that I stop trying to breastfeed entirely and just try bonding with the baby – more skin-on-skin contact. In the meantime, I was to keep the milk supply up with a breast pump and feed her breast milk using whatever method (i.e. bottle or syringe or spoon) I preferred. Dr. Smillie thought that after I spent some time bonding with my baby and made her comfortable with my body again, she would naturally want to breastfeed once she matured a bit. She estimated this could take up to four weeks.

I was skeptical. Who has ever heard that a baby can develop an aversion to the breast? Where in any book does it say if you are having trouble with breastfeeding, you should stop trying entirely? But I was so exhausted and emotionally stressed that I agreed that maybe a break would be the best thing. So I pumped like crazy, fed my daughter with a bottle, and spent time with her skin-on-skin. I do have to admit I didn't give up completely. About once a day, I would put her close to the breast to see if there was an interest at all, but if she started to fuss, I would stop.

A few weeks passed. The constant pumping and bottle feeding was exhausting. Each day I wondered to myself how long I would be able to keep this up. And each day I would resolve to continue unless there was really no hope left.

A few days after my baby turned one month, while I was rocking my crying baby in my arms during the night, I was astonished when she slowly started to inch towards my breast on her own and latched on! I couldn't believe it! I told my husband and called La Leche League, my mother and everyone else. It was the milestone that I had yearned for and I was so thrilled. It wasn't all solved then and there. It took a couple of days for her to latch on again and then another

two weeks for her to latch onto the other breast. In the meantime, I was still pumping, but with renewed hope. I could not believe it was working!

By the time my daughter was two months old, I had eliminated the bottle and was breastfeeding her exclusively. I then experienced all the problems many women have when they are establishing breastfeeding (i.e. blisters, plugged ducts). During those times I found myself thinking to myself, "I should have been careful what I wished for." But then I remembered how hard we had worked to make this happen.

By the time she was three months old we were in breastfeeding heaven. She is now seven months old and has been breastfeeding with no problems at all. I am so happy I was able to give my child this first gift, the gift of perfect nutrition. But in all my elation, I never thought I would be receiving a gift in return – a beautiful bond with my baby girl. The month-long ordeal that I went through was probably one of the hardest things I have had to endure physically, mentally and emotionally. Would I do it again? Absolutely, and with no doubt.

I'm hoping that the lessons I learned from my hardship can help another new mother. I hope my experience can encourage someone with a similar situation to not give up. It might take a month, two months – trust yourself and your baby. But you have to dig deep and ask yourself if you want to work hard at this. It will be painful and emotional, but one can get through it, and the rewards are priceless. But if you decide you don't want to do it, don't beat yourself up - don't feel bad and know that you did the best you could. Finally, if you are in this situation, make sure you are surrounded by people who support your decision. I could never have done it without the support of my husband and my mother, or the incredible intuition of the La Leche League Leader and Dr. Smillie. Thanks to all of you who helped me provide my first daughter with this irreplaceable gift.

Editor's Note:

A weight loss of 5% to 7% is normal. While a weight loss of 10% is considered acceptable, it may be a sign that breastfeeding is not going smoothly and additional help is needed.

Loving Lessons in Breastfeeding

When I was growing up in the north of England I didn't have any experience of seeing anybody breastfeeding, so for me it was as if breastfeeding didn't exist! People had babies and babies had bottles of formula milk - I didn't know any different.

But that changed about eight years ago when my husband's sister, Sharon, breastfed her baby. I was in my mid 20s and although having my own children was far from my mind at that time, it had an enormous impact on me. Seeing Sharon breastfeed her baby struck me as something very beautiful and very loving, so much

more than using a bottle to merely give a baby food. Instead this was something amazing, and I decided then that I would certainly do the same and breastfeed my babies.

It was only when I became pregnant, a couple of years after we moved to Hong Kong, that I learned more in depth about the health benefits associated with breastfeeding. Emily was born in the public health system, and I attended their breastfeeding class and gained information from leaflets and books.

I was excited at learning about all the great benefits breastfeeding offers, and my enthusiasm was contagious when explaining it to my husband.

He understands how important it is and feels as strongly as I do about it and is very supportive.

Some people say that Hong Kong is not an encouraging environment to breastfeed, but I actually think it's much easier than in the UK. I have a few Australian friends here for whom

breastfeeding is totally the norm, and they've very much been role models for me.

I had a very easy and smooth pregnancy; not even any morning sickness. So, naively, I assumed the birth would go smoothly, too...I'm so glad that I attended a La Leche League Tea Break whilst pregnant as the mothers were discussing what would happen if a baby

needed to be admitted to the Special Care Baby Unit. I was keen to learn the importance of soft cup feeding, instead of giving a bottle, but to be honest, I didn't think for a minute that I'd have to experience any of it.

A week before my due date my waters leaked, but I didn't go into labour. I had to go into hospital to be induced and wanted to wait until the following morning in case I went into labour overnight. I walked the ward countless times, hoping that the exercise and gravity would encourage the onset of labour but to no avail. I even jogged on the spot, which the nurses found hilarious, telling me that I was the first mother-to-be ever to have jogged on their ward! During the induction I was told that my baby would be taken to the Special Care Baby



Pauline and family

Unit because of fear of infection due to the prolonged leaking. I was very upset by this as I had not realized the implications of this delay, and I had put so much emphasis on getting the breastfeeding off to a good start.

Despite this, I was able to breastfeed Emily in the labour suite within the first hour of her birth, and we were together for about 30 minutes before she was taken away. We had skin to skin contact, and she latched on straight away. For me, that first breastfeed felt very powerful in bonding us.

Emily remained in the Special Care Baby Unit for seven days. For the first three days I could go up and down between floors to feed her, but after three days I had to leave the hospital. I was devastated because all I wanted to do was to breastfeed my baby, and a huge obstacle was being put up. I didn't feel in control and was very emotional; I was scared that this could damage our breastfeeding, which was already being challenged by our separation.

A very good friend who's own baby had spent a week in Special Care, was my lifeline and explained the logistics of pumping and freezing my milk and then transporting the frozen milk to the hospital for Emily to have during the night. Once I had a clear way forward I was able to calmly deal with the new situation. Every day I went to the hospital at 8.00am and stayed until 9.00pm to breastfeed Emily throughout the day. Thankfully, Emily continued to breastfeed well, but the separation did delay my milk coming in. This didn't worry me, as I knew it would come and in the meantime she was receiving the goodness of the colostrum. In between feeds I was either asleep in the waiting room or I was pumping. At night I got up twice to pump so that I could provide the hospital with breast milk that they gave to her during the night using a soft cup. I had included on my birth plan that if the baby should need to go to Special Care that she be fed using a soft cup and not a bottle.

Whilst pregnant I had intended not to go near a pump for at least six weeks, probably longer, so trying to pump just a few days after giving birth

when nothing came out I just cried. Sniffling and generally feeling sorry for myself I hadn't noticed the very slow drip, drip, drip into the bottle, and then I was elated! The extremes of emotions of a new mother are quite something, aren't they?

In hospital Emily fed every three hours, but when she came home it seemed like she wanted to feed all the time! It was such a different feeding pattern that I was worried we were doing something wrong. I phoned a La Leche League Leader and luckily there was a meeting the next day. I hadn't planned on leaving the house so soon, but I felt it was important to iron out any problems straight away, so I took Emily to her first La Leche League meeting when she was just nine days old and only a day and a half out of hospital. At the meeting an LLL Leader helped me improve Emily's latch and reassured me that Emily and I were doing just fine, which was just what I needed. Additionally, having breastfed Emily at the hospital for a week and having to constantly clock watch to be able to report back to the nurses, it was liberating to hear that I could forget time and just relax and enjoy breastfeeding her whenever and for however long she wanted.

In the early days Emily did feed very frequently, and I didn't get much sleep, but the early months soon passed and it got easier and easier. For me, the numerous health benefits of breastfeeding make it the only choice, and it seems to me only logical to give babies natural food for their delicate digestive systems.

My husband and I have had colds recently and Emily has managed to avoid them. Just the other day her doctor commented on how healthy she's been to date, and I like to attribute that to our breastfeeding. From a convenience aspect, too, breastfeeding has to be the number one fast food! Food and comfort on tap whenever and wherever it's needed.

I've found my whole breastfeeding experience very empowering and have a great sense of achievement from it. I love the special closeness it gives us and the true bond it has soldered.

Colostrum: Liquid Gold

In the first few days after birth some mothers worry that they don't have enough milk for their baby. In fact, the first milk, colostrum, is ready and waiting and it's all the baby needs.

Colostrum is the first milk your breasts produce in the early days of breastfeeding. This special milk is low in fat, and high in carbohydrates, protein, and antibodies to help keep your baby healthy. It is extremely easy to digest, and is therefore the perfect first food for your baby. It is low in volume but high in concentrated nutrition for the newborn. Colostrum has a laxative effect on the baby, helping him pass his early stools, which aids in the excretion of excess bilirubin and helps prevent jaundice.

When your baby is breastfed early and often, your breasts will begin producing mature milk around the third or fourth day after birth. Your milk will then increase in volume and will generally begin to appear thinner and lighter in color. In those first few days it is extremely important to breastfeed your newborn at least 9-12 times in 24 hours-- and more often is even better. This allows your baby to get all the benefits of the colostrum and also stimulates production of a plentiful supply of mature milk. Frequent breastfeeding also helps prevent engorgement.

Your colostrum provides not only perfect nutrition tailored to the needs of your newborn, but also large amounts of living cells which will defend your baby against many harmful agents. The concentration of immune factors is much higher in colostrum than in mature milk.

Colostrum actually works as a natural and 100% safe vaccine. It contains large quantities of an antibody called secretory immunoglobulin A (IgA) which is a new substance to the newborn. Before your baby was born, he received the benefit of another antibody, called IgG, through your placenta. IgG worked through the baby's circulatory system, but IgA protects the baby in the places most likely to come under attack from germs, namely the mucous membranes in the throat, lungs, and intestines.

Colostrum has an especially important role to play in the baby's gastrointestinal tract. A newborn's intestines are very permeable. Colostrum seals the holes by "painting" the gastrointestinal tract with a barrier which mostly prevents foreign substances from penetrating and possibly sensitizing a baby to foods the mother has eaten.

Colostrum also contains high concentrations of leukocytes, protective white cells which can destroy disease-causing bacteria and viruses.

Later, when you are producing mature milk for your baby, the concentrations of the antibodies in the milk will be lower, but your baby will be taking in much higher volumes of milk. The disease-fighting properties of human milk do not disappear with the colostrum. In fact, as long as your baby receives your milk, he will receive immunological protection against many different viruses and bacteria.

Adapted from: <http://www.llli.org/FAQ/colostrum.html>

Memorable/Favourite places to breastfeed!

By the mothers of

LLL Wakkai Group, Japan

One day while taking a bath with my infant son I discovered a way to shampoo his hair without his getting all upset. I was getting ready to shampoo his hair, when he latched on and started nursing. Clean hair with no fuss!

The sofa in our living room is our favorite place to nurse because home is where we are most of the time and it is comfortable

Our favorite nursing spot is lying down on a futon and nursing till my son is full and replete.

I really liked the nursing room at a baby department store in Sapporo. There are individual alcoves divided by curtains that give privacy and lessen distractions when needing to nurse a little one. It also has an open area where fathers and older siblings can wait, a place for washing up, hot water, and vending machines with drinks for mom.

Nursing while taking a bath lends for a comfy, warm drink of mommy's milk.

My daughter likes to leisurely nurse when we take a bath together.

On a car trip to Sapporo from Wakkai (a hour drive) my daughter did not want to sit in her child seat and kept asking to nurse. As the trip was long and I was driving, it was very difficult.

Once I had to nurse my baby standing up in the bathroom of the hospital because there was no other place to go. I was sad that it was so difficult to find a place to nurse at the hospital.

In the early months after my daughter's birth we had to travel by plane often. Nursing on the airplane was such a blessing because it helped calm her down and relieve the pain from air pressure changes in the ear. Recently, when riding a plane and nursing my now two year old daughter, I was surprised to see that her feet stuck out past the armrest! This made me realize how much she has grown since we last traveled by plane.

The first time I was able to breastfeed my son in the NICU nursing room at the hospital

In the News

LA LECHE LEAGUE MOURNS THE LOSS OF EDWINA FROEHLICH



Edwina Froehlich of Inverness, Illinois, co-founder of La Leche League International and co-author of *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, died on June 8, 2008 after suffering a stroke on May 25.

In 1956, Edwina Froehlich and six other women met in Franklin Park, Illinois to share information on how to successfully breastfeed their babies. The group quickly attracted the attention of other women and became an organization called La Leche League. "In those days you didn't mention 'breast' in print," Froehlich once said. "We knew that if we were ever going to get anything in the paper we would have to find a name that wouldn't actually tell people what our organization was about." The breastfeeding support group took the Spanish name for milk as its name. From these roots grew La Leche League International, a breastfeeding support not-for-profit organization, which has groups in every U.S. state and in 68 different countries. The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding has been translated into eight languages and Braille.

Edwina was a member of the Board of Directors of La Leche League, and at various times served as Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Chairman of that group. She also worked at La Leche League International as Executive Secretary from 1956 until her retirement in 1983. Edwina, according to her co-founders, had an indomitable spirit. When difficulties stood in the way of La Leche League she said, "We are not going to let this kind of thing get in the way. This is a problem that we are going to have to live through, and work through, and resolve, so that we can continue to do what we originally set out to do—help mothers successfully breastfeed their babies."

Born Edwina Hearn on January 5, 1915 in Bronx, New York, she attended Mundelein College in Chicago, Illinois, later married John Francis Froehlich and had three children. Preceded in death by her husband in 1997, she is survived by her three sons: Paul Froehlich, David Froehlich and Peter Froehlich; three daughters-in-law and nine grandchildren.

WATCH OUT - for a new Group in United Arab Emirates

A new LLL Group is opening in Abu Dhabi. Meetings will take place at the Leader's home. For more details please contact Eve: evelaleche@earthlink.net.



Bienvenue aux mamans francophiles!



A new LLL Group has opened in Tokyo to cater for French-speaking mothers. The Group is called: SoleILLL Levant, and meetings are led by Joelle. For more details please email: joelle.tokyo@gmail.com.

Breastfeeding information for ALL new mothers in Hong Kong

The Hong Kong group distributed 60,000 copies of the information pamphlet: *When You Breastfeed Your Baby* to all the hospitals in Hong Kong. Money for this project was granted by the Matilda Sedan Chair Race Fund. LLL-HK Leader, Sarah Hung, says, "We hope every new mother in Hong Kong can have good information about breastfeeding to hand when she gives birth."



A New library for Mumbai

Exciting news from Mumbai where LLL has just received a \$700 donation to develop a LLL library. The funding came from a private donor who heard about the expansion of LLL Groups in the city and wanted to provide a selection of breastfeeding and parenting books to support the new Groups.

There are currently two LLL Groups in Mumbai. The first is in Mulund, a suburb in the northeast and a second Group in Bandra, close to the city centre. Averil Thuemmel, La Leche League Leader in Mumbai says she is delighted by the development of LLL in India. "Indian women tell me our meetings are very different from other classes they have attended and they really enjoy learning and sharing information."

"Since many mothers are encouraged to stay at home for the first few months, it is a welcome trip out to attend a LLL meeting and get some support," Averil explains.

For details of meetings in Mumbai contact Averil: averil_martin@hathway.com or Kavita: kavitamukhi@gmail.com

LLL Tokyo celebrates 50 years of worldwide breastfeeding support



On Sunday, May 18, La Leche League of Tokyo celebrated over 50 years of breastfeeding support around the world. A family picnic was held in the popular Yoyogi Park in central Tokyo from 10am until 2:30pm.

Dana and her family from Furla Yoga got us all standing, stretching, and rhythmically breathing in a soft grassy area in the sunshine. What a way to start the morning! Smiles and the pleasure of human touch abounded as individual stretches turned into family poses. Next up were two happy clowns performing balloon art for the masses. Little guys running around with their swords, gals with their flowers, and a whole range in between! Some of the creations were real works of art with the clowns taking considerable time to patiently make little ones' dreams come true.

Then Mikey the Clown arrived with his bag of tricks. Kids and parents alike were wowed by his sleight of hand magic, drama, and perky personality. It's obvious Mikey loves kids by the special attention he gave each one, making everyone feel loved.

Families enjoyed their picnic lunches throughout the day. Children took turns making masks and crowns, running around in the grass with egg and spoon relays, and playing with a colorful parachute, tossing balls high in the air.

Stacey from Fantasy Parties made many kids REALLY happy with pirate tattoos and flower, lion and tiger faces. Stacey also generously donated a party package to our silent auction, which won our highest bid of the day!

Our main fundraiser, the silent auction, offered a variety of products and services from the local community, including professional photo sessions, yoga, music and play sessions, slings, toys, books, and a whole lot more! We greatly appreciate all of our sponsors and donors for the time, energy and gifts they offered us.

In addition, a big thank you to all who attended, donated, and participated in our silent auction. We are proud to have raised a considerable amount of money that will be used to support La Leche League both locally and across Asia.

Postcard from MUMBAI, India

Hi everyone, I am Banumathi Shujith. I live in Mulund, one of the central suburbs of Mumbai, India with my five-month-old baby Divyanka and my mother-in-law. My parents along with my brother and grandmother stay a few blocks away. These are all the people who give me all the support and help that I need to take care of my angel. My husband works in Dubai and had to go away just a month after Divyanka was born, but he is always just a call away.

Mulund is a well developed suburb with many amenities for young mothers, including maternity homes, good doctors, antenatal classes, yoga and meditation. The three-storey apartment where I live is away from the main street, free from the noise of vehicles, and my room is surrounded by trees. I used to wake up to the chirping of birds in the morning but nowadays am woken on demand of her highness, Ms Divyanka. Well, I have started taking pleasure in such an alarm clock, too.

My daughter was delivered on the 29th of November, 2008. To be frank I had not preplanned anything about breastfeeding. Indian culture encourages breastfeeding. All women breastfeed. I always knew I would do it. As soon as I saw the baby I put her to my breast, and there she was sucking.



However, the early days were troublesome. My doctors gave me an injection after delivery to help me rest, and I only woke up two and half hours later. I regret to have not spoken to my doctor about my desire to feed my baby as soon as she was born.

At the beginning, Divyanka nursed for hours and she would cry a lot. I used to wonder if I had enough milk to satisfy her hunger. There were days when the nurses in the hospital used to take the baby and feed her formula. I knew it was not right but just was not assertive enough to say no. The first two weeks was my testing time. I was exhausted and wanted to sleep but the baby would wake up and I had

to figure out her commands. She used to sleep all day and woke up many times at night. She would be active then and would want to play. I found it difficult to sleep during the day, but knew I could not go long like this so I learned to sleep when the baby slept. Slowly both of us got tuned and adjusted to each other. Further I mastered the art of feeding lying down and this provided me the convenience and much required rest.

Though breastfeeding is common in India, exclusive breastfeeding till six months is rarely practiced. Solids are often introduced as early as three months. It was at my prenatal classes that I got to know the importance of breastfeeding exclusively till six months. I learned the methods, dos and don'ts, and advantages of breastfeeding. The classes gave me knowledge and made me a firm supporter of breastfeeding. Though I was convinced, it was difficult for me to convince my family to exclusively breast feed. They kept telling me to start other food (cow's milk mixed with sugar). But then I attended La Leche League meetings which gave me the conviction required to keep my mind focused to carry on exclusive breastfeeding. The proper weight gain and good health and activeness of my baby convinced my family too that I was doing the right thing. Their concern that the baby would go hungry was cleared, and they started supporting me. I decided that I would take an extension from my work so that I could fully breastfeed my baby.

My social life took a back seat for a couple of months but then I decided that both mom and daughter need some outings. Now I take Divyanka out every day to gardens and malls. I feed her whenever she is hungry. But breastfeeding in public is a rare sight. I guess

many women choose to be at home while breastfeeding. When a woman breastfeeds in India in public, she covers herself and the baby with a soft cloth. Most of the men give the woman space and look away making the woman comfortable.

Now our breastfeeding sessions are very enjoyable for me. It gives me a lot of relaxation and satisfaction. It gives me a high sense of motherhood and a great opportunity to be close to my baby. I keep looking at the way she closes her eyes and sucks at the breast while I stroke her. I feel on top of the world to see my baby so happy and content. She makes me feel special when she becomes quiet immediately after coming into my arms. I have found breastfeeding hassle-free. In fact, I frown at the thought of introducing solids as presently breastfeeding is so easy. There is no extra work of cleaning or preparation required.

I now encourage all my friends to plan breastfeeding and to discuss it in advance with the doctor and family. I want them to be assertive and find out means to ensure that the baby is breastfeeding exclusively from the time of birth till six months and further as a supplement until at least two years of age.



Banumathi Shujith
Mumbai Group

Magic Ingredients!

Compiled by **Maggie Holmes**
Leader with the Hong Kong Group



Study suggests breastfeeding raises IQ

The largest randomized study of breastfeeding ever conducted reports that breastfeeding raises children's IQs and improves their academic performance, a McGill researcher and his team have found. In a new article, Dr. Michael Kramer reports the results from following the same group of 14,000 children for 6.5 years.

"Our study provides the strongest evidence to date that prolonged and exclusive breastfeeding makes kids smarter," said Kramer, a Professor of Pediatrics and of Epidemiology & Biostatistics in the McGill University Faculty of Medicine and lead investigator in the study.

Kramer and his colleagues evaluated the children in 31 Belarusian hospitals and clinics. Half the mothers were exposed to an intervention that encouraged prolonged and exclusive breastfeeding. The remaining half continued their usual maternity hospital and outpatient pediatric care and follow-up. This allowed the researchers to measure the effect of breastfeeding on the children's cognitive development without the results being biased by differences in factors such as the mother's intelligence or her way of interacting with her baby.

The children's cognitive ability was assessed by IQ tests administered by the children's pediatricians and by their teachers' ratings of their academic performance in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects. Both sets of measures were significantly higher in the group randomized to the breastfeeding promotion intervention.

"Although breastfeeding initiation rates have increased substantially during the last 30 years, much less progress has been achieved in increasing the exclusivity and duration of breastfeeding," the authors conclude.

"The effect of breastfeeding on brain development and intelligence has long been a popular and hotly debated topic," says Dr. Kramer. "While most studies have been based on association, however, we can now make a causal inference between breastfeeding and intelligence -- because of the randomized design of our study."

McGill University (2008, May 6). Breastfeeding Associated With Increased Intelligence, Study Suggests. *ScienceDaily*. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/05/080505162902.htm>

Questions Mothers Ask

Q: I've just started pumping - but nothing is coming out.
I'm worried I don't have enough milk!

A: This is a very common concern among breastfeeding mothers. The most important thing to remember is: don't panic and get help!

Some mothers find expressing easy and some never manage to express more than a teaspoon. Remember that the amount you can express bears little relation to the amount of milk in the breast.

When a mother looks down at her baby she gets a rush of the hormone oxytocin. This causes the milk ejection reflex, or let-down, and the milk sprays out. However, when she looks down at a pump, her body may not trigger the same hormonal changes, so she may find it hard to get a let-down.

Secondly, if a mother is at home all day with her exclusively breastfeeding baby then after a few weeks the body will have worked out just how much milk it needs to make to satisfy baby. When the mother starts pumping she is suddenly asking the body to make some extra milk, so it may take a few days to build up the extra supply.

Some tricks to overcome these difficulties include:

- When you first start pumping, go easy on yourself. Congratulate yourself on each drop or teaspoon.
- If your baby is with you, try breastfeeding on one side while pumping on the other. This can take a degree of agility but it can help mothers achieve a let-down.
- If you are separated from your baby, try to create a relaxed environment while you pump. You can look at a photo of your baby or smell his clothes. Try to think happy thoughts about your baby. This, too, can help the milk flow more easily.
- Remember that short, frequent sessions will yield more milk over 24 hours than long, infrequent sessions. Many mothers understandably want to wait a few hours before pumping, because they assume that if their breasts feel fuller they will be able to express more milk. In fact, the opposite is true. The way the breast works is that the more frequently it is drained, the faster it fills up. So, shorter pumping sessions whenever you can will be more effective.
- If you are still really struggling you could consider trying a different pump. Some mothers love the electric pumps and some prefer the hand pumps. There's no rhyme or reason - it's really a personal choice. Hand expressing works well for many mothers too. If you find hand expression difficult ask your La Leche League Leader for tips on the Marmet Technique of manual expression. She can also give you some general encouragement and support to get you over any tricky patches.



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