

## **Breastfeeding**

Breastfeeding in public is no longer a common sight in Britain and the U.S. An editor for *Mother & Baby Magazine* referred to breastfeeding as 'creepy' and bottlefed her baby from birth because she said she wanted her body back. TV star Denise Van Outen gave up breastfeeding after less than a month because she felt uncomfortable breastfeeding in public.

On the other hand, supermodel Gisele Bundchen declared that mothers should breastfeed their babies for the first six months by law. Bundchen received a lot of criticism for her remarks and was forced to back down. Her aim was to draw attention to a serious situation but it quickly became apparent that her views are unlike those of other Western mothers.

The editor and the TV star little suspect the long term suffering their views could have. Indeed, the medical facts about breastfeeding are generally met with disbelief. Mother's milk supplies baby with antibodies, perfect nutrition and immune system boosters, protecting baby from allergies, asthma, diabetes, ear and respiratory infections and gastroenteritis. Breastfeeding has a slimming effect on mothers and reduces the risk of breastcancer.

Professor Emmanouil Galankis has proven that these benefits are lost if breastfed babies are also given baby formula. The British Department of Health recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months because bottlefed babies face dangers breastfed babies do not.

Despite the fact that only 1% of women cannot breastfeed for medical reasons, 20% of mothers never breastfeed. Even worse, at 6 months only 1 in 5 are breastfeeding. These facts raise important questions about why paediatricians are not being more successful in encouraging mothers to breastfeed.

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