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For Immediate Release

Providing Information and Inspiration
National Breastfeeding Month serves to promote mom-baby benefits

The benefits of breastfeeding last a lifetime. As a result, the Grand Traverse County Health Department (GTCHD) and the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance (NMPHA) are promoting their breastfeeding support services throughout the month of August: National Breastfeeding Month.

Did you know that:

- 85% of mothers want to breastfeed,
- 80% begin breastfeeding their baby, but only
- 30% reach their breastfeeding goals without support?

“Early in pregnancy, moms set goals about breastfeeding, whether it's to breastfeed for a month, the recommended six months, a year, or longer,” said Deputy Health Officer Jodi Kelly, MSN, BSN, RN. “Public Health Nurses, Dietitians, and Breastfeeding Peer Counselors provide the support families need to meet their goals by answering questions, providing information, problem-solving, and offering assurance.”

In addition to helping the baby build a strong immune system, breastfeeding lowers the baby's risk for short and long-term illnesses such as asthma, childhood obesity, type 1 diabetes, and sudden infant death syndrome, or SIDS. Breast milk also contains substances that naturally soothe the baby, and breast milk changes to meet the baby's nutritional needs as they grow.

There are also health benefits for moms during this vulnerable time. Breastfeeding reduces the mother's risk of ovarian and breast cancers. It's also a natural way to lose some of the baby weight, as it burns 500-600 calories a day.

While breastfeeding is natural, it often comes with many questions and challenges. GTCHD provides extensive support programs for mothers as they breastfeed.

“Everyone's feeding journey is different,” said Healthy Futures & Maternal Infant Nurse Cindy Purvis, BSN, RN, IBCLC. “We are here to support you with your family's journey and what works for you.”

To learn more about our breastfeeding services, contact GTCHD at 231-995-6130.

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Proud member of the Northern Michigan Public Health Alliance: 7 local health departments advocating for public health.