



Healthlink

A publication by the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program
Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Commissioners: Terence Farrell, Carol Aichele, Kathi Cozzone

610 344-6240

"Good Nutrition Today For A Healthier Tomorrow"

August, 2009



World Breastfeeding Week August 1-7, 2009

Each year the first week of August is set aside to celebrate women around the world who dedicate themselves to providing breast milk to their infants. The theme this year is "Breastfeeding: A Vital Emergency Response: Are You Ready?" which highlights the value of being able to nurse your infant should something like a tornado, tsunami, or governmental revolution disrupt normal living.

The Pennsylvania WIC Program has chosen, however, to consider a different aspect of this theme by using the week this year to highlight the new food packages which will be available to nursing moms and their infants beginning in October, 2009. Since these food packages are by far the largest amounts of food per month that WIC provides to any women, infants, or children enrolled in the program, maybe we are, in some sense, putting out an emergency need in homes of our at-risk population.

As many of you may be aware, the US Department of Agriculture has not changed the WIC food packages of milk, cheese, eggs, juice, cereal, dried beans or peanut butter that WIC women and children receive for over thirty years. At last, this October some wonderful changes are coming to the program that better meet today's nutritional needs for families.

One major change for breastfeeding participants is that women who fully nurse their infants will receive a food package each month which consists of low-fat milk, cheese, cereal, juice, eggs, whole grains such as whole wheat bread, canned fish, dried or canned beans, peanut butter, and a check for \$10.00 for fresh, canned, or frozen fruits and vegetables. When her fully breastfed infant reaches 6 months of age, the baby will be provided with 64 4-oz jars of infant fruits/vegetables, 31 2.5 oz. jars of infant meats, and 24 ounces of infant cereal. These food packages have a worth of \$1, 620.00 per year and really reward moms for providing the healthiest, most nurturing start for their infants for the first year of life.

Along with these enhanced food packages, the USDA has recognized the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for at least the first month postpartum. This time enables infants and moms to work together to learn to nurse well, boost the health benefits for both mom and infant, and build mom's milk supply. While mom receives extra WIC foods, breastfeeding support, and use of a breast pump if she wishes to have one, infants will not be provided with artificial milk during this initial month of life.



Since the Healthy People 2010 goal for the United States is to have 75% of all infants being breastfed at birth, the general population continues to make progress toward attaining that goal. But in the more vulnerable WIC population, those of us who work with the program understand the lack of self-esteem of our women, the hardship of being a single woman with children, or the need for moms to work to provide enough for her family. But with more support from the community, and education that points to the many benefits of breastfeeding for a healthy life for her infant and herself, many of our moms are making the decision that breast is best. In Chester County, 68% of our WIC moms initiate breastfeeding when their babies are born. Hopefully, the new, improved WIC food packages will help even more moms decide to nurse their infants in the coming year. The celebration highlighting breastfeeding can then become a daily occurrence - a celebration that Chester County babes are provided with mother's milk, which is food and so much more, as they begin their lives.



Want to find WIC Clinics in Chester County? Here are the locations and hours of operation.

Permanent Clinics

Coatesville

Coatesville Center for Community Health
1001 E. Lincoln Highway
Coatesville, PA 19320
610 383-3824

Clinic Hrs: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30-4:30
Monday, Wednesday 10:00-6:00

Toughkenamon

1465 Old Baltimore Pike
Toughkenamon, PA 19374
610 268-5153

Clinic Hrs: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30-4:30
Monday, Wednesday 10:00-6:00

West Chester

Chester County Health Department
Government Services Center
601 Westtown Rd., Suite 180
West Chester, PA 19380-0990
610 344-6240

Clinic Hrs: Tuesday & Friday 8:30-4:30
Monday & Wednesday 10:00-6:00

Satellite Clinics

Oxford

Oxford Presbyterian Church
6 Pine Street
Oxford, PA 19363

Call Toughkenamon: 610 268-5153
Clinic Hrs: 2nd & 4th Tuesday monthly 9:00-3:30

Phoenixville

First Presbyterian Church
145 Main Street
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Call West Chester: 610 344-6240
Clinic Hrs: 1st & 3rd Thursday,
and 3rd Friday monthly 9:30-3:30

Spring City

United Church of Christ
145 Chestnut Street
Spring City, PA 19475

Call West Chester: 610 344-6240
Clinic Hrs: 2nd Thursday monthly 9:30-3:30

WIC is an equal opportunity program and provider.