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New program helps moms reach breastfeeding goals

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY NEWS

Ask any mother who has tried to breastfeed and she'll tell you it's not always easy. But ask any mom who stuck with it and she'll tell you it's well worth it.

Most mothers fully intend to breastfeed their baby, but when problems arise, they feel they have no one to ask for help. This leads to frustration and many give up. But moms with breastfeeding challenges don't have to go it alone. Mid-Michigan District Health Department's International Board Certified Lactation Consultant Angie Martin is here to help.

"Sometimes a mom struggling with breastfeeding just needs a little help to be successful, and that's where I come in," Martin said. "It's become my mission to help as many moms succeed as possible because breastfeeding benefits a mother and her child in so many ways."

Breast milk supplies a baby with the necessary nutrients in just the right proportions. It boosts a baby's immune system, providing protection from allergies, illness and infection. It also guards against childhood obesity and diseases like diabetes. Breast milk is easily digested, which means no constipation, diarrhea or upset stomach. The result is a happy baby and a less-stressed mom.

Mothers who breastfeed reap the rewards as well. They have a reduced risk of developing Type

2 Diabetes and certain cancers, like breast and ovarian cancer. They tend to have less postpartum depression, may find it easier to return to their pre-pregnancy weight and enjoy a strengthened bond with their baby. Then there is the convenience factor- it's available whenever and wherever your baby needs it, so there are no expensive formulas to buy and no bottles to clean.

Women experiencing breastfeeding problems, such as latching difficulties, painful nursing, or low milk production, shouldn't give up, they should call Martin. She has personal breastfeeding experience and has been trained to provide expert support and education to pregnant and breastfeeding women. She is able to troubleshoot any issues that may come up, and if a woman is ready to return to work, she can also assist with the transition.

"I like to meet with the mom-to-be during her pregnancy to talk about her expectations and help dispel myths," said Martin. "Then, after her baby is born, I'm available to help with any issues she may be having. My main goal is to fix problems that come up so the mother can reach her breastfeeding goals."

Martin is able to see clients with and without insurance, either in her office at the Health Department or in the woman's home. For more information or to make an appointment, call (989) 763-2384.