

***Ukiah Valley
Medical Center***



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Ukiah Valley Medical Center Gets “Baby Friendly”

What if there was a new vaccine that could prevent one million child deaths per year and was cheap, safe, and administered orally?

This new vaccine would also protect infants from developing asthma, diabetes and obesity later on in life. Better yet, it would prevent development of dental problems, saving the cost of dental care and orthodontics.

Breastfeeding does all this and more. Breast milk contains antibodies to protect infants from infection from bacteria such as streptococcus, e. coli, salmonella and staphylococcus aureus. Breast milk also contains viral antibodies to provide resistance to common viruses.

According to the World Health Organization, in countries with a high infant mortality rate, artificially fed (formula) infants are at least 14 times more likely to die from diarrhea than are breastfed infants and 4 times more likely to die from pneumonia.

“Families need to be able to make a truly informed choice about feeding their babies,” said UVMC Lactation Consultant Bonnie Bruce, RN, IBCLC. “If a mother chooses to bottle feed, her choice should be respected, but it should be based on receiving clear and complete information about both methods of feeding.”

Ukiah Valley Medical Center’s Family Birth Center is committed to providing accurate information so families can make an informed choice. This commitment involves receiving a Certificate of Intent through the World Health Organization to become a “Baby-Friendly Hospital.” To that end, staff education is ongoing with an emphasis on providing consistent information about the benefits of breastfeeding. More importantly, UVMC staff members provide education to new mothers and assistance if breastfeeding problems arise.

Part of being Baby-Friendly is involvement with the Loving Support Program, a collaborative effort between Ukiah Valley Medical Center, Mendocino County Health Department, La Leche League and WIC to provide all mothers and babies with

breastfeeding information and help. The Loving Support Program is made possible by a grant from FIRST 5 Mendocino and offers a Breastfeeding Resource Line in both English and Spanish to help direct mothers to breastfeeding assistance. For more information on the Loving Support Program, call (707) 472-2744.

August is World Breastfeeding Month and UVMC is hosting a conference in partnership with the Mendocino Breastfeeding Coalition. The conference is scheduled for August 3, 2006 and will feature breastfeeding expert Jane Heinig, PhD. For more information or to register, call (707) 463-7564.

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ATTENTION MEDIA: Photos available upon request.

Ukiah Valley Medical Center is part of Adventist Health, a not-for-profit, faith-based health system operating in California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington. Founded on the Seventh-day Adventist heritage of Christian health care, Adventist Health is comprised of 20 hospitals with more than 3,100 beds, 18,800 employees, numerous clinics and outpatient facilities, 16 home care agencies and three joint-venture retirement centers. For more information, visit www.uvmc.org or www.adventisthealth.org.