

Scotland Makes the Breastfeeding News

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This week, see how oxytocin rewards moms who nurse, why Scotland is making breastfeeding news, and the origins of the term “tongue tied” and why it matters when it comes to nursing.

Nursing Creates Waves of Feelings ... and Oxytocin

An [article](#) this week on the [BBC News](#) site reports that scientists have discovered that nursing triggers a surge of oxytocin in mothers, who are, in effect, rewarded for nurturing their children.

Oxytocin is referred to as the “feel good” hormone. Nursing moms can attest that nursing and letdown create feelings of contentment, relaxation, and calm. Oxytocin is also the hormone that promotes feelings of trust, love, and confidence.

This study’s results show that when a baby nurses, it causes specific neurons in the mother’s brain to synchronize their actions and release large, regular pulses of oxytocin into the mother’s system from information-transmitting and -receiving parts of the cells. It is the size and regularity of these pulses that strengthen the bond between a mother and her child.

If you're interested in reading the original study article, "Emergent Synchronous Bursting of Oxytocin Neuronal Network," click [here](#) .

Scotland Encourages Moms to Nurse Until Their Children Are Two

An [article in The Scotsman](#) reports that the country hopes to improve the health and IQ of its children by telling expectant moms to nurse their babies until their second birthday. All expectant women will be given this advice later this year, in addition to a breastfeeding DVD.

NHS Health Scotland, the government’s health education group, is basing its advice on World Health Organization recommendations and on the increasing evidence that children who are breastfed are at lower risk of a variety of health issues, such as gastroenteritis, diabetes, obesity, eczema, ear infection; they also may have higher IQs. In addition, recent research seems to indicate that women who breastfeed are at lower risk of breast and ovarian cancer.

While some view the government’s public health message as a possible turn-off to expectant mothers, others see the campaign as a positive step for the health of both babies and mothers.

Freeing Tongue-Tied Babies

Babies who are having trouble latching on, who aren't gaining weight, and whose mothers are exceptionally sore may just be tongue-tied.

A study conducted by researchers in Australia investigated the effectiveness of surgically freeing a frenulum to treat infants who had difficulty nursing, despite the mothers receiving professional help from certified lactation consultants; poor weight gain; and mothers with very sore nipples.

The frenulum is the thin membrane that attaches the underside of the tongue to the bottom of the mouth. When a baby's frenulum is too short, her tongue movements are restricted. In breastfed babies, this can lead to poor latch-on (clearly seen on ultrasound imaging in this study), poor milk intake, and poor milk production. Nursing infants with a short frenulum also have mothers with very sore nipples – and the pain often leads the mother to wean her infant from the breast rather than endure the pain of nursing.

Fortunately, the surgical procedure was shown to be effective in resolving these problems. The babies gained weight, the mothers produced more milk, and the mothers' nipples were much less sore.

If you'd like to read the original article, "Frenulotomy for Breastfeeding Infants with Ankyloglossia: Effect on Milk Removal and Sucking Mechanism as Imaged by Ultrasound," click [here](#).

About the Author

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<http://www.typeamom.net/scotland-makes-the-breastfeeding-news.html>