

Snappy Comebacks to Rude Breastfeeding Remarks

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Sometimes people seem compelled to ask you questions and make observations about things that are really none of their business. Breastfeeding is one of those things. Here are a few tips for dealing with unwanted input.

Here's a little head's up for you: from the moment you become pregnant until your "child" retires, people are going to offer their advice. You can't necessarily control what they say, but you can control how you react and what you say.

Here are a few scenarios for you to think about and decide how you might respond.

Breastfeeding is gross.

- So is changing diapers, yet people do it all the time, and don't even get me started about sex.
- The reason human women have breasts is to feed their young.
- Hello? Did you not realize that humans are mammals?
- Seems to me that you have some issues you need to work out.
- Feeding my baby with whatever it is that they put in formula is gross to me.

There goes your figure!

- Guess what? Studies have proven that nursing does not contribute to breast sagging.
- And why is my figure of interest to you?
- Um, I doubt that my figure will be the same as it was before I became pregnant.
- Didn't you know that nursing takes off the baby weight a whole lot faster than bottle-feeding?
- And I should care about that because ... ?
- Guess you didn't know that breastfeeding will reduce my risk of contracting breast and ovarian cancer and may help protect me from osteoporosis.

Why would you want to nurse when you can just get formula?

- Gee, I don't know. It must have something to do it with being free, always the right temperature, portable, what nature intended, and the best way I can nourish my baby.
- Have you checked out the price of formula lately?
- Did you know that babies are never allergic to their mothers' breast milk but often are terribly allergic to formula?

Note: It's been pointed out that babies CAN have allergic reactions to their mother's milk. I should have been a bit more thorough in checking out that point. Thank you, HeavenlyMayday, for letting me know!--LAH

- Breast milk is absolutely safe; the same can't necessarily be said for formula.

How long are you going to do that? Shouldn't you be feeding your baby solid food now?

- I plan to follow medical recommendations: The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding through the end of the first year.

Note: Another oops here ... Summer has pointed out that what the AAP has to say is this: "Exclusive breastfeeding for approximately the first six months and support for breastfeeding for the first year and beyond as long as mutually desired by mother and child." Thanks for setting me straight, Summer!

- Oh, until he goes off to college.
- And you need to know that ... why?

Don't you want your husband to be able to bond with the baby?

- You're right, holding the baby, talking to the baby, changing the baby, bathing the baby, and spending time just being with the baby sure won't be enough for him to bond with the baby.

You want to get up in the middle of the night to nurse?

- Sweetheart, all I need to do is sit up, take the baby out of her bassinet, and nurse her.
- You're right: I sure don't want to get up; that's why my husband gets up and brings the baby to me.
- I'd rather nurse in my sleep than schlep to the kitchen and try to mix, heat up, and feed my baby formula in my sleep ... because I sure do love sleeping.

There goes your sex life.

- My husband would be really shocked to hear that ... especially after we ... well, I'd better not say any more.
- I really don't see how my sex life can possibly be any business of yours.
- I'm touched that you'd be concerned about my sexual fulfillment.
- Are you speaking from experience?

What does your husband think of you doing that?

- He's the one who suggested it.
- He thinks that, since it's my body, it's my decision.

- He loves the idea of not having a sickly baby ... you know, like some formula-fed babies are.
- He's delighted ... with the enhancement of my assets.

You don't nurse your baby in public, do you?

- I'm nursing him right now. (There were many times when I was nursing while holding my son in a sling, and my own husband had no idea I was nursing.)
- Sure I do ... I just whip out a breast and ...
- Oh, heaven forbid! It's so much better for me to feed my baby in a filthy, disgusting public lavatory at the mall than to sit on a bench there and discreetly nurse.
- You do know that nursing in public doesn't mean exposing myself in public ... don't you?

I hope these responses will help you if you ever find yourself on the receiving end of a pointed question about nursing. Just keep in mind that the way you choose to nourish your child really isn't up for discussion ... unless you choose it to be.

Laurel Haring is a writer and editor. She and her family live in Wilmington, Delaware. Laurel loves responding with, "Why do you need to know?" when someone asks her a rude or nosy question.

<http://www.typeamom.net/snappy-comebacks-to-rude-breastfeeding-remarks.html>