

## BREAST FEEDING PATTERNS IN GENITAL CANCERS: AN EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REVIEW

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### **Abstract**

Lactation results in a number of physiological adaptations which exert direct effects on maternal health, some of which may confer both short and long term advantages for breast feeding mothers. It delays the return of ovulation and significantly reduces fertility during the period of lactational amenorrhoea. This process is linked with feeding patterns and may therefore be affected by practices such as scheduled feedings and the timing of introduction of complementary foods. While the evidence from epidemiologic studies is mixed, several large studies have shown that extended lactation is associated with reduced risk of premenopausal breast, ovarian and endome-

trial cancers.

Our study reveals that almost half of ovarian cancer patients had never breastfed. Data was collected regarding cumulative breast feeding duration, months of breast feeding per pregnancy, years since the mother's first and last lactation, age at first lactation, complimentary feeding characteristics such as type of milk used, age of weaning & problems associated. Further studies with larger sample size are needed for careful consideration of how such practices affect genital malignancies.