



News Articles, Research Update, Breastfeeding

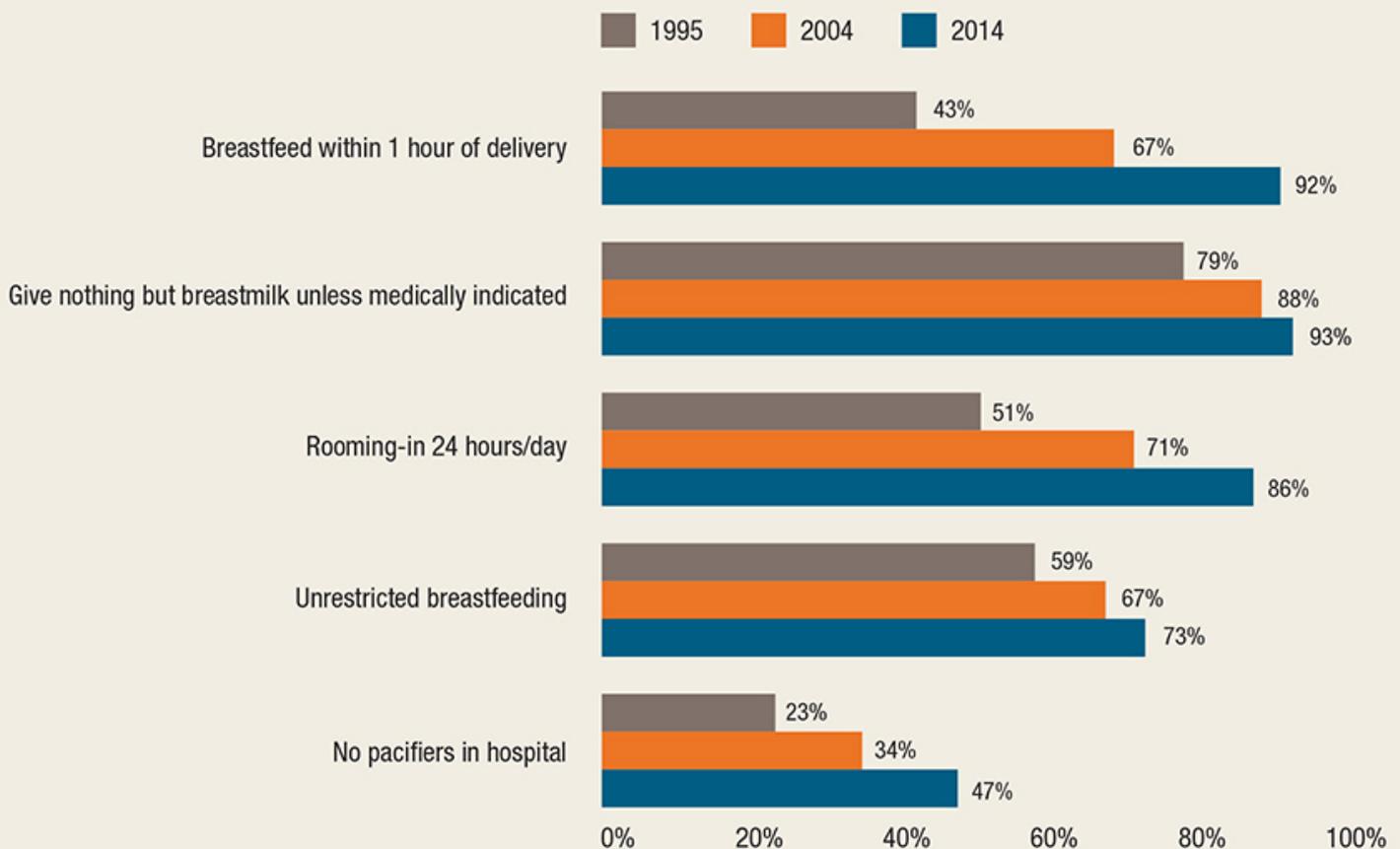
Study looks at trends in breastfeeding attitudes, counseling practices

by from the AAP Department of Research

New research based on data from the AAP Periodic Survey of Fellows indicates that primary care pediatricians' recommendations regarding breastfeeding have become more reflective of AAP policy over the last two decades (Feldman-Winter L, et al. *Pediatrics*.2017;140:e20171229, <http://bit.ly/2xQQWGs>).

The authors found that 76% of pediatricians in 2014 recommended exclusive breastfeeding during the first month of life, up from 65% in 1995. Additionally, almost all pediatricians now recommend initiating breastfeeding within the first hour after delivery (92%) and keeping the newborn in the mother's room throughout the hospital stay (86%), whereas about half of pediatricians recommended these practices in 1995 (see figure). In 2014, more pediatricians reported that their main affiliated hospital had applied for a "baby-friendly" designation than in 1995 (57% vs. 12%, respectively).

% of primary care pediatricians making breastfeeding recommendations across time



AAP Periodic Survey #30, #57 and #89

Source: Feldman-Winter L, et al. "National Trends in Pediatricians' Practices and Attitudes About Breastfeeding: 1995 to 2014." *Pediatrics*. 2017;140:e20171229.

The study also found that pediatricians' beliefs about breastfeeding success and the benefits of breastfeeding



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have declined slightly. In 2014, 57% of pediatricians believed that any mother can successfully breastfeed with persistence compared to 69% in 1995, and about half (53%) said breastfeeding benefits outweigh the difficulties and inconveniences faced by mothers compared to 68% in 1995.

Each Periodic Survey was mailed to approximately 1,600 non-retired U.S.-based AAP members. Response rates in 1995, 2004 and 2014 were 72%, 55% and 51%, respectively. Analyses were limited to pediatricians providing primary care to children 2 years old and younger. The 2014 survey was supported in part by Grant No. UC4MC21534 from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (Title V, Social Security Act), Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services. The conclusions are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Resources

- [For more information on the Periodic Survey of Fellows, visit http://www2.aap.org/research/periodicsurvey.htm or contact Liz Gottschlich, in the AAP Division of Health Services Research, at 847-434-7627 or \[lgottschlich@aap.org\]\(mailto:lgottschlich@aap.org\)](http://www2.aap.org/research/periodicsurvey.htm)
- [For more information on the AAP Section on Breastfeeding, visit http://bit.ly/2x26aEd or contact Ngozi Onyema-Melton, in the AAP Division of Pediatric Practice, at 847-434-4784 or \[nonyema@aap.org\]\(mailto:nonyema@aap.org\)](http://bit.ly/2x26aEd)
- [For additional breastfeeding content, including practice tools and educational materials for pediatricians and parents](#)