Media Reviews

Reviews by Kathleen A. Marinelli MD, IBCLC, RLC, FABM¹

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BabyBabyOhBaby Nurturing Your Gorgeous and Growing Baby by Breastfeeding

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Productions Inc,
\$26.00 USD
28 minute DVD

<http://store.lli.org/public/profile/544>

This beautifully composed DVD is a must-see for all! It is meant for mothers and families who are either contemplating breastfeeding, or may have already made the decision, but still have doubts. Professionals should view it as well. It is a practical, real-world guide to breastfeeding. The experts are real mothers and babies who let you into their breastfeeding lives, tell you honestly what to expect, and want to share the joy they have found in breastfeeding. They are not necessarily demonstrating perfect technique. But they are all successfully breastfeeding. As is stated on the cover:

Much more than a how-to film, *BabyBabyOhBaby: Breastfeeding*, is a heart-felt, honest, and reliable introduction to one of the very best parts of motherhood.

The entire DVD is visually and auditorily calming and soothing. It begins with mothers talking about the wonderment of pregnancy, babies, and breastfeeding while showing beautiful photographs of mothers and their babies. Gentle music plays in the background as the narrator speaks: "Breastfeeding is the heart of mothering. The way nature wants you to take care of your baby." The miracle of a woman's body growing a cell to a baby to a person leads to the importance of the first hour—"skin to skin and heart to heart," a time to relax, recuperate, and begin the bond of a lifetime.

The next section is the breast crawl, and beautifully shows video of babies finding their way to the breast, and baby-led breastfeeding. The narrator talks about the

early milk, colostrum, how it helps the immune system and the intestines. It also describes how the milk changes over time to provide exactly what an individual baby needs at that particular time. She discusses oxytocin, the "cuddle hormone," and a mother emotionally says, "I am the only person who grew her and can sustain her!" The narrator tells us that the key is comfort: calm, snuggles, present in mind, body, and spirit. Refreshingly, we are told that the best position is—whichever works best! The baby is already an expert most of the time. So just let them do their thing.

The mothers are of all ages, ethnicities, and one has tattoos: in other words, normal moms. Breastfeeding is depicted as "on the job training." There is no right or wrong—as long as mom is comfortable, the baby is getting milk, and it becomes second nature. If things don't seem to be going well, first thing to do is to go back to the beginning: laid-back breastfeeding. Mothers are also told that if they need help, they should contact their local La Leche League, their health care provider, or an internationally board certified lactation consultant.

The second-most important job in the world is that of the mother's partner. It is the partner's job to nurture mom so she can nurture the baby. But it is also important for the baby and partner to have special bonding time as well.

A section on questions and answers addresses the following, all visually and verbally by mothers and babies:

- How do I know my baby is hungry?
- What is a feeding cue?
- How do I know my baby is getting enough?
- My breasts are too big/small. Can I still breastfeed?
- This is not working. What do I do?

Mothers' groups are suggested as a great idea for support, talking over questions, and watching other mothers and babies interact. Then going back to work or school is discussed, showing mothers expressing milk with a variety of types of pumps, and even hand expressing into a bottle. The last topic is weaning, with a reminder that

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the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and at least one year of continued breastfeeding.

This is truly a beautiful DVD, and I highly recommend it to all pregnant mothers and their partners. As a health care provider, I also recommend it to all of us who counsel mothers about breastfeeding. This critical subject is presented in the most gentle, beautiful, calm way I have ever seen, and I think we would all learn from this approach. I can certainly see this video playing in waiting rooms where pregnant mothers are waiting for health care. What a beautiful picture to come away with!

New Insights into Vitamin D during Pregnancy, Lactation and Early Infancy

Carol L. Wagner, MD, with Sarah N. Taylor, MD, and Bruce W. Hollis, Ph.D. © 2010 Hale Publishing LP., Amarillo, TX, \$24.95 USD

www.ibreastfeeding.com

Vitamin D is certainly a hot topic these days; no pun intended. We hear about it everywhere, from medical practice to the daily news. It has been a controversial issue in breastfeeding for the last several decades—to supplement or not to supplement—is that the question?

As so eloquently elucidated in the book, *New Insights Into Vitamin D During Pregnancy, Lactation, and Early Infancy*, Drs. Wagner, Taylor, and Hollis take us on a journey of our past, and current knowledge and understanding of vitamin D, which is actually not a vitamin at all. As they explain, vitamin D is a prohormone that has profound effects on metabolism and immune function extending far beyond purely bone and calcium metabolism. As they state in the summary:

Vitamin D is the substrate precursor to one of the most powerful hormones in the body—1,25-dihydroxy-vitamin D, which has profound effects on metabolism and immune function that extend far beyond the traditional thinking of bone and calcium metabolism. We are only just beginning to understand its effects on various organ systems throughout the body—from epidemiological studies to its action at the cellular level. Vitamin D had been linked to inflammatory and long-latency

diseases, such as multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, tuberculosis, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and various cancers, to name a few. How can such a simple “vitamin” be involved in such diverse groups of diseases? What is the mechanism? What does it mean to you as the individual, as the practitioner, or as the public policy maker? (p. 7)

They pack a tremendous amount of information into this 164-page soft-cover book. We begin the journey with the history of vitamin D, its relationship to rickets, and its discovery as the active rickets-preventing component in cod liver oil. We are then taken through the lifestyle changes that have led to widespread vitamin D deficiency throughout most populations, leading to one of the largest nutrient deficiencies beginning in the late 20th century. As they tell this “story,” it is fascinating to learn how we compounded this effect by our lack of knowledge of the metabolism and function of this compound, thus setting forth recommendations that have now been associated with furthering the vitamin-D-deficiency state. Chapters are spent elucidating the metabolism of vitamin D, its functions, and importantly, defining vitamin D sufficiency. This is accomplished using scientific data and research studies, pointing out those of quality and those with flaws that influenced our views—and thus our use, and misuse of vitamin D. And although some of the writing is quite technical, it is done in such a way that those among us without technical or chemistry backgrounds can easily follow and understand. Thus it bridges both worlds quite nicely: the scientific-minded and those with interest, but possibly without the scientific background. As an MD, I “should” understand the science. But I must admit that when I start reading chemical formulations, I can easily drift off. This book kept me riveted, focused, and interested as it is so well written.

They go on to discuss vitamin D in the context of its various functions—bone mineralization, immune function—and how that knowledge influences our views on vitamin D requirements. We then go on to learn about the effects of deficiency during pregnancy, lactation, and implications for early childhood and later adult life. There is a comprehensive discussion of the current controversies surrounding vitamin D supplementation, and what can be done by health care professionals and public health officials to impact health care to prevent further vitamin D deficiency.

The final three chapters detail, with evidence presented

from the scientific studies done to date, vitamin D requirements during pregnancy and lactation, and the vitamin D recommendations for the pregnant and lactating woman and her infant. These chapters are extremely important to the work we do, but must be understood in the context of the information gleaned from the preceding chapters. In other words, I highly recommend that one reads this book from start to finish, and not just jump to the last chapter and the table of recommended doses of vitamin D. Only in that way, can one understand how they are derived, and where, as further large-scale randomized trials that are mentioned (and will soon be completed) are going. These authors are leaders in this research. They are the ones I want to hear from about how to supplement lactating women in

order to ensure sufficiency in their nursing infants, when the data are in.

Finally, this book is extremely well-referenced. There are over 500 full references at the end. So if you are interested in looking into any aspect of this subject more fully, you have the information right at hand. *New Insights into Vitamin D* is a well-woven story encompassing the science, the history, the humanity, the mistakes, and the current research in a fascinating look into one of the most controversial subjects in the field of not only human lactation, but pediatric and adult medicine. It is a far-ranging subject, and I enthusiastically recommend this book to view it in a concise and remarkable way.

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