



Extra-organised support for mothers encourages breastfeeding in healthy term babies

Evidence in numbers



116 studies, over **98 816** mother-infant pairs,
across **42** countries.

Authors' conclusions

- Providing **extra support** for **breast-feeding mothers** may **increase** the **duration** of **breastfeeding healthy babies** for **more than 6 months**.
- **Support** in the form of **reassurance, praise, and information** can be offered **face-to-face**, via **telephone** or through **digital technologies** and can be most **effective** when delivered on a **schedule** of **4-8 visits**.
- Tailored extra support (**based on need/setting**) can be offered by **professional, peer supporters** or **both**, and **reduce the number** of women **who stop breastfeeding** for less than 6 months.

Gavine A, Shinwell SC, Buchanan P, Farre A, Wade A, Lynn F, Marshall J, Cumming SE, Dare S, McFadden A. Support for healthy breastfeeding mothers with healthy term babies. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2022, Issue 10. Art. No.: CD001141. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD001141.pub6. Accessed 24 June 2026.

Objective



The study examined whether participation in organised breastfeeding support provided by midwives, nurses, doctors, and community health workers, peer supporters or volunteers could help mothers maintain exclusive breastfeeding beyond the recommended six months.



Key messages



- Organised support throughout breastfeeding helps mothers breastfeed their babies for longer.

- Support provided via **telephone** is **more effective**, but **it does not matter** who provides it.



- The **effectiveness** of extra support **depends** on the **setting** and **population group**.

About Cochrane South Africa

This Plain Language Summary was produced by Cochrane South Africa, at the South African Medical Research Council, which seeks to improve public health outcomes through producing, promoting, and translating high-quality evidence-based research.



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