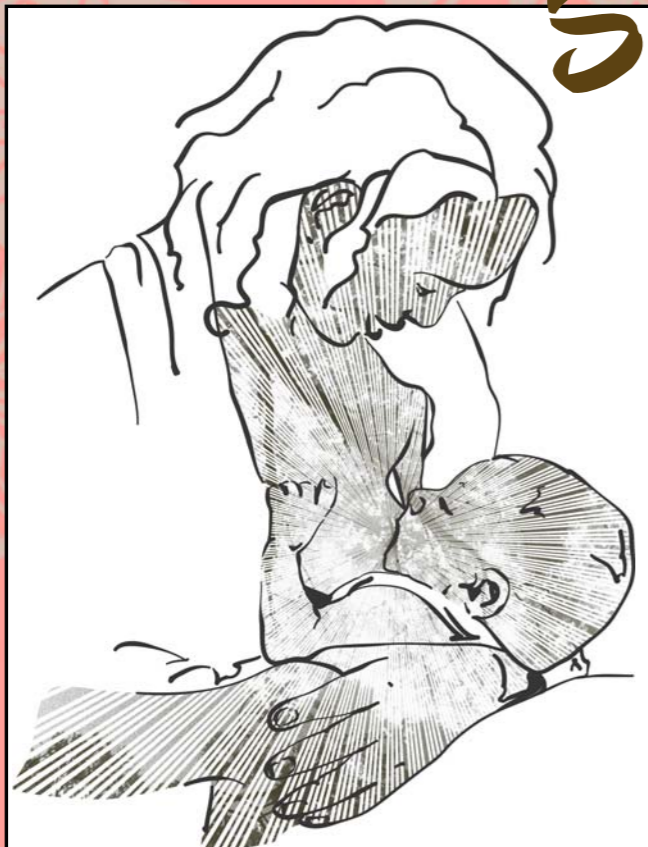


Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy

in African-American Women
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Significance of Study

- Breastfeeding is well-known to have significant health benefits for mothers and infants
- Protective effects of breastfeeding are enhanced by greater duration and exclusivity of breastfeeding
- African-Americans have a breastfeeding rate (45% immediately after birth) lower than the national average (64%), and are less likely to breastfeed exclusively
- Infant mortality among African-Americans is more than double that of Caucasians
- Lower breastfeeding rates account for some of the differences in infant mortality
- Increasing the breastfeeding rate will also help prevent obesity in African-American children

Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy

(a mother's belief that she will be able to organize and carry out the actions necessary to breastfeed her infant)

- Self-efficacy has been found to contribute significantly to decision-making, initiation and maintenance of a variety of health producing behaviors
- Self-efficacy is a potentially modifiable variable
- Breastfeeding self-efficacy has been shown to predict breastfeeding duration and pattern of breastfeeding (exclusively breastfeeding or combination of breast and formula feeding)
- Breastfeeding self-efficacy has not been studied in African-American women

Network support

- Social network of the mother is an important influence on both initiation and duration of breastfeeding
- Role models for breastfeeding are important, but less available to African-American mothers when breastfeeding is not the cultural norm
- Professional support for breastfeeding influences breastfeeding initiation, but African-American women are less likely to be encouraged to breastfeed
- Social network support may directly influence breastfeeding, or indirectly by influencing self-efficacy

Aim of study:

To investigate the relationship between breastfeeding self-efficacy and the duration and pattern of breastfeeding, and the relationship between network support for breastfeeding and breastfeeding self-efficacy in African-American women

Research questions

- What is the association between breastfeeding self-efficacy and duration of breastfeeding among African-American women?
- What is the association of breastfeeding self-efficacy with breastfeeding pattern among African-American women?
- Is there a relationship between network support for breastfeeding and breastfeeding self-efficacy in African-American women immediately postpartum and at 4 weeks postpartum?

Research design

- Sample: African-American healthy primiparas ages 16 and above, with healthy, term infants
- Time 1: Within 72 hours postpartum: Demographic data, Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale, Network Support for Breastfeeding Measure (during postpartum hospitalization)
- Time 2: 4 weeks postpartum: Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale, and description of breastfeeding pattern (telephone interview)
- Times 3, 4, 5 & 6: Description of breastfeeding pattern until complete discontinuation of breastfeeding or 6 months postpartum (telephone interview)

Results

- Results will inform further research into interventions to promote breastfeeding among African-American women
- Effective interventions will help improve the health of African-American women and infants, including decreasing the infant mortality rate