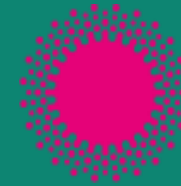


Factors associated with breastfeeding among women with pre-pregnancy diabetes: An exploratory study

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Research Team



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- Breastfeeding has well recognised maternal, infant and public health benefits¹
- The World Health Organisation recommends exclusive breastfeeding for babies to six months of age².
- Compared to women without pre-existing diabetes, among women with type 1 and type 2 diabetes:
 - breastfeeding rates are lower³
 - duration of breastfeeding is shorter⁴
- Not much is known about individual and social factors that are associated with breastfeeding among women with type 1 or type 2 diabetes.



Aim



To identify physical, social, psychological and cultural factors associated with breastfeeding at 3 months post-birth among women with type 1 and type 2 diabetes



- Ethics approval from Deakin University and each hospital
- Women with type 1 or type 2 diabetes were recruited from obstetric and diabetes clinics at three metropolitan hospitals in Melbourne, Australia.
- All participants provided written informed consent.



- Women completed surveys during pregnancy (30-34 weeks gestation)
 - Face-to-face with a member of the research team at a scheduled hospital consultation
 - Survey included questions about demographic and reproductive factors, and women's intention to breastfeed to at least 3 months postpartum: Infant Feeding Intentions Scale⁵
- Follow-up surveys at 3 months post-birth
 - Over the phone with a member of the research team
 - Survey included questions about birth, current breastfeeding, social and health professional support

Results



Of the 102 pregnant women who were invited to participate,

- 79 (77.5%) women completed the survey during pregnancy (Mean gestation 31.5 weeks)

	n (%)	Mean (SD, Range)
Participant age		33.3 (5.1, 20 - 43)
Born in Australia	43 (54%)	
Tertiary education	62 (79%)	
Married / Living with partner	70 (89%)	
First child (primiparous)	30 (38%)	
Diabetes type		
Type 1	38 (51%)	
Type 2	37 (49%)	

- 47 (59.5%) also completed surveys at 3 months post-birth (Mean infant age 13.4 weeks)

- At 3 months post-birth, 68.2% of women were still breastfeeding (exclusive or any)
- The following factors were not significantly associated with breastfeeding :
 - Demographic variables
 - Parity
 - Type of diabetes
 - NICU admission
 - Social and health professional support
- Only intention to breastfeed to at least 3 months (assessed during pregnancy) was significantly associated with breastfeeding at 3 months

- Breastfeeding rates consistent with Australian prevalence (69%, 4 months post-birth)⁶
 - Australian healthcare system offers good postnatal clinical support to facilitate breastfeeding among women both with and without diabetes
- Study strengths:
 - Assessed a broad range of factors which may be associated with breastfeeding
 - Intention to breastfeed was assessed during pregnancy, other studies have assessed it retrospectively or post-birth⁸⁻¹⁰
- Study limitations:
 - Small sample, difficult to recruit
 - No control group (without pre-existing diabetes)



Implications



- Intention to breastfeed is a known predictor of breastfeeding among women in general⁵⁻⁷ - these findings demonstrate that among women with type 1 or type 2 diabetes **the importance of intention to breastfeed outweighs other potential predictors** of breastfeeding at 3 months post-birth.
- Health care providers caring for women with type 1 or type 2 diabetes during pregnancy, have the potential to:
 - Educate women about the importance of breastfeeding
 - Support their breastfeeding intentions



Acknowledgment



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References & Acknowledgments



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