

NCHS Data Brief

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Breastfeeding in the United States: Findings from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999-2006

- In the 2005-2006 birth cohort group, 65% of non-Hispanic black infants were breastfed compared with 80% of Mexican American and 79% of non-Hispanic white infants.
- Although breastfeeding rates were significantly lower among non-Hispanic black infants, significant increases in breastfeeding rates have occurred in this group.
- The percent of non-Hispanic black infants who were ever breastfed increased from 36% for those born in 1993-1994 to 65% for those born in 2005-2006.
- Within maternal age groups, there were race-ethnicity differences in breastfeeding rates. Mexican-American infants who were born to mothers who were less than 20 years of age had a significantly higher breastfeeding rate (66%) compared with non-Hispanic white (40%) and non-Hispanic black infants (30%). Non-Hispanic black infants whose mothers were 20-29 years or 30 years and older were significantly less likely to be breastfed than their non-Hispanic white and Mexican American counterparts.
- There was no significant change in the rate of breastfeeding at 6 months of age for infants born between 1993 and 2004.
- The rates of breastfeeding at 6 months of age were computed for each birth year cohort using information from NHANES 1999-2004 for infants 6 months of age and older. The NHANES 2005-2006 data were not included in the analysis because the sample size for the birth year cohort was too small to produce reliable estimates.
- Overall, the rates of breastfeeding at 6 months of age were significantly higher among Mexican-American (40%) and non-Hispanic white infants (35%) compared with non-Hispanic black infants (20%), but the rates for Mexican-American and non-Hispanic white infants were not significantly different. The *Healthy People 2010* target goal for breastfeeding at 6 months of age is 50% (2). None of the race-ethnicity groups achieved the target goal.
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Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db05.htm>

