



# Breastfeeding

## Virginia — PRAMS, 2012-2014

### Background

Breastfeeding provides mothers and their infants with many health benefits. Compared to infants fed formula, infants fed human milk have a lower risk of asthma, ear infections, and sudden infant death syndrome. For breastfeeding mothers, the risk of ovarian and breast cancers is lower compared to mothers who never breastfed. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusively breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life, and continuing to breastfeed, as solid foods are introduced, through at least 12 months.<sup>1</sup>

### Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

PRAMS collects state-specific, population-based data on maternal attitudes and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy. PRAMS sites that met the 60% response rate threshold for data analysis are included in overall estimates. Results presented in this report include both “Core” questions, which are asked by all participating PRAMS sites, and “Standard” questions, which sites had the option to include on their PRAMS survey.

To learn more about PRAMS methods and to see “Data Availability by State and Year” visit:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/prams>

### National Breastfeeding Goals

Breastfeeding	Healthy People 2020 Objectives <sup>2</sup>	Title V National Performance Measures <sup>3</sup>
<b>Initiation</b>	Increase the proportion of infants who are ever breastfed	Percent of infants who are ever breastfed
<b>Duration</b>	Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed at 6 months and 1 year	No related performance measure
<b>Exclusivity*</b>	Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed exclusively through 3 and 6 months	Percent of infants breastfed exclusively through 6 months

\* Infants only receive human milk except for medicine, vitamins, and minerals when necessary

### Breastfeeding Rates

Healthy People 2020 breastfeeding targets and Title V Performance Measures are tracked using data from the National Immunization Survey, which collects data on breastfeeding practices from caregivers when the child is 19 to 35 months old. PRAMS data are collected from mothers when their infant is 2 to 9 months old. PRAMS data can be used to assess influences on breastfeeding practices and to identify populations at risk of not following breastfeeding recommendations.

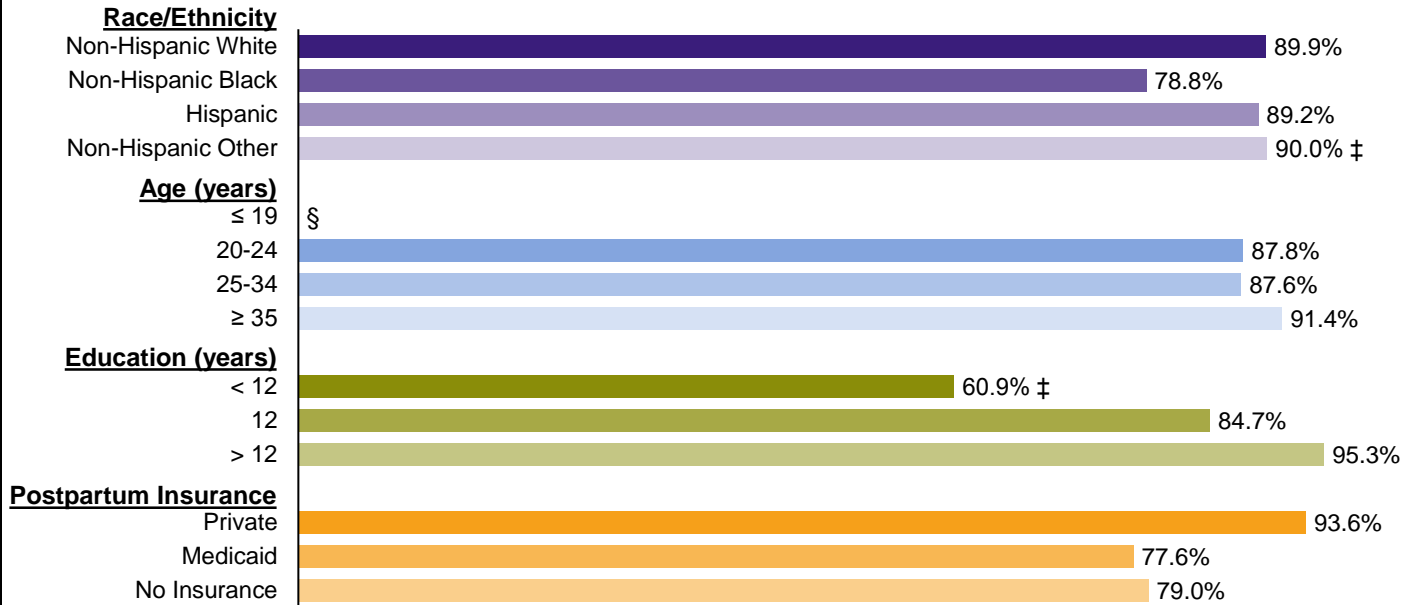
PRAMS Indicators	Virginia %			Multiple Sites %
	2012	2013	2014	2014
Ever breastfed	84.6	89.9	88.6	86.3
Any breastfeeding at 8 weeks	64.1	74.4	63.2	64.8
Exclusive breastfeeding at 8 weeks*	†	†	†	36.9

\* Standard PRAMS Indicator

† PRAMS site-level data unavailable

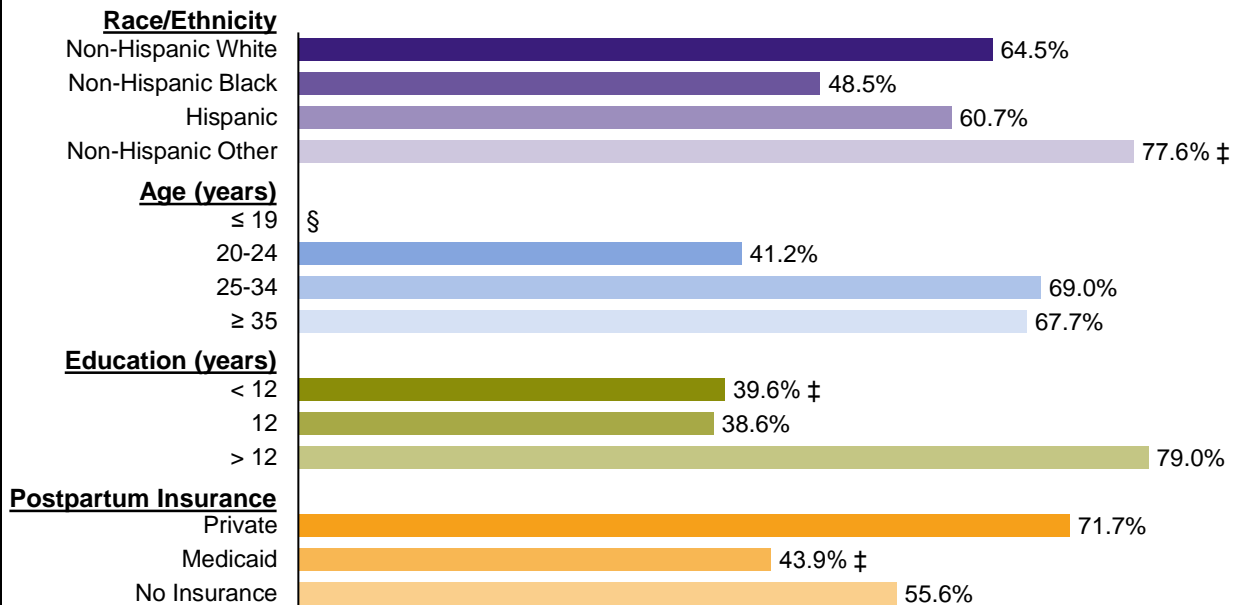
## Who Initiates Breastfeeding?

Mothers who reported ever breastfeeding, by selected characteristics — Virginia, 2014



## Who Breastfeeds at 8 Weeks?

Mothers who reported any breastfeeding at 8 weeks, by selected characteristics — Virginia, 2014



§ < 30 respondents; not reported.

‡ < 60 respondents; may not be reliable.

## Breastfeeding-Related Maternity Care Experiences

Supportive maternity care practices at health facilities are associated with increased rates of mothers starting and continuing to breastfeed. For example, including breastfeeding education as a part of maternity care is associated with longer breastfeeding duration.<sup>4</sup>

Standard PRAMS indicator completed by mothers who gave birth in a hospital and reported ever breastfeeding	Virginia %			Multiple Sites % 2014
	2012	2013	2014	
<b>Maternity Care Practices Supportive of Breastfeeding</b>				
Hospital staff gave me information about breastfeeding	†	†	†	95.9
Hospital staff told me to breastfeed whenever my baby wanted	†	†	†	84.8
My baby stayed in the same room with me at the hospital	†	†	†	84.7
Hospital staff helped me learn how to breastfeed	†	†	†	82.5
The hospital gave me a telephone number to call for help with breastfeeding	†	†	†	80.0
I breastfed in the first hour after my baby was born	†	†	†	74.1
My baby was fed only breast milk at the hospital	†	†	†	58.1
<b>Maternity Care Practices Unsupportive of Breastfeeding*</b>				
The hospital staff gave my baby a pacifier	†	†	†	53.1
The hospital gave me a gift pack with formula	†	†	†	46.3

\* Negative responses indicate receipt of appropriate maternity care

## Reasons Women Did Not Breastfeed

Standard PRAMS indicator completed by mothers who reported never breastfeeding	Virginia %			Multiple Sites % 2014
	2012	2013	2014	
I didn't want to	54.5	46.8	39.5	37.7
I didn't like breastfeeding	27.4	20.0	27.2	28.1
I had other children to take care of	16.4	14.4	17.2	20.6
I went back to work or school	5.5	14.2	14.1	19.1
I was sick or on medicine	6.2	19.5	13.3	13.6
I tried but it was too hard	11.2	10.2	4.5	13.1
I had too many household duties	6.5	0.8	8.1	12.5

## Reasons Women Stopped Breastfeeding

Standard PRAMS indicator completed by mothers who reported ever breastfeeding	Virginia %			Multiple Sites % 2014
	2012	2013	2014	
I thought I was not producing enough milk, or my milk dried up	49.3	50.1	66.0	50.2
Breast milk alone did not satisfy my baby	28.7	34.5	47.6	33.2
My baby had difficulty latching or nursing	28.5	26.7	24.7	30.6
It was too hard, painful, or too time consuming	21.4	16.6	26.2	22.0
I went back to work or school	31.6	21.5	11.9	19.1
My nipples were sore, cracked or bleeding	17.3	14.2	21.7	16.4
I thought my baby was not gaining enough weight	9.8	9.4	14.9	11.7
I had too many other household duties	11.9	14.4	11.6	11.4
I felt it was the right time to stop breastfeeding	5.2	10.0	10.3	8.3
I got sick or I had to stop for medical reasons	7.6	8.0	7.7	7.3
My baby was jaundiced	8.3	7.3	13.4	6.6

## Public Health Action

- The majority of PRAMS respondents reported ever breastfeeding (86.3%) and over half (64.8%) reported they were breastfeeding at 8 weeks.
- Among mothers who stopped breastfeeding, half (50.2%) reported they stopped because they thought they were not producing enough milk or their milk had dried up.
- Public health efforts can focus on providing mothers with the support they need to reach their breastfeeding goals.

## Resources

**CDC Website on Breastfeeding:** <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/>

**Office on Women's Health Website on Breastfeeding:** <https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/>

### References:

1. Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/129/3/e827>
2. Healthy People 2020 Objectives: <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/maternal-infant-and-child-health/objectives>
3. Title V National Performance Measures: <https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/PrioritiesAndMeasures/NPMDistribution>
4. CDC Guide to Strategies to Support Breastfeeding Mothers and Babies: <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/resources/guide.htm>

