

# BREASTFEEDING FOR PATIENTS WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

## Recommendations for Moving Forward



## EMPOWER PROJECT



### Education for healthcare providers and patients is important.

The knowledge related to substance use and breastfeeding is increasing. It is important for health care providers to stay up to date. Patients need to know the facts about the benefits of breastfeeding and safety considerations.

“Having someone on your team that is knowledgeable about substance use, medication for opioid use disorder, and breastfeeding is critical”  
–Tara Cain, EMPOWER patient stakeholder



### Connect patients to resources.

Patients with substance use will benefit from linkage to resources to support breastfeeding, such as breast milk storage bags, breast pumps, and breastfeeding classes.



### Supportive breastfeeding policies can help improve breastfeeding outcomes.

Experts recommend development of evidence-based policies that support mother-infant dyads affected by maternal substance use.



### Benefits from breastfeeding are important for infants with substance exposure.

Research has shown infants with prenatal exposure to opioids have shorter hospital stays, reduced risk of needing pharmacological treatment for withdrawal, and less severe withdrawal symptoms.



The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM), American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and American Academy of Pediatrics, (AAP) support breastfeeding for this patient population; see recommendations from each organization:



[ABM](#)



[ACOG](#)



[AAP](#)