

2019 INFANT FEEDING SURVEY

Key Findings

September 26, 2019



INFANT NUTRITION
COUNCIL OF AMERICA

Survey Overview

- The 2019 Infant Feeding Survey was conducted February 27-March 11, 2019 by the bipartisan polling firms Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research (GQRR) and Public Opinion Strategies (POS)
- Mothers and caregivers were asked a series of questions related to how they feed their infant, motivations behind their choices to feed, beliefs, surrounding various feeding methods, and how they receive that information, among other questions.
- To ensure accurate representation, demographic controls were based on the American Community Survey by the US Census Bureau of mothers who had a birth in the last 12 months.



Survey Overview

WHO WAS POLLED?

Mothers who had given birth in the last 12 months and **caregivers** of newborns and infants were surveyed to gain insights into infant feeding practices.

Caregivers were defined as individuals spending more than 30 hours per week caring for a baby under 12 months old

Mothers: 802
Caregivers: 400

Total Respondents: 1,202

WHAT THEY WERE ASKED

- Motivations behind their choices to feed.
- Sentiments surrounding various feeding methods.
- How they receive their feeding information.

Key Findings

1. Moms and caregivers strongly support having access to **accurate**, easy-to-understand information on **both breastfeeding and infant formula** in order to make informed infant feeding decisions.
2. Moms and caregivers view the **government** as an important source of information on infant feeding and believe the government should provide balanced guidance on both breastfeeding and infant formula.
3. While mothers understand the benefits of breastfeeding, the majority of moms **oppose restricting** information about infant formula, from either the government or in the hospital setting.
4. While the vast majority of babies receive both breast milk and infant formula, most moms **feel judged** for how they feed their baby, regardless of whether they breastfeed or use formula.
5. Moms and caregivers need **greater awareness of the risks** related to non-recommended infant feeding options such as homemade formula and sharing breastmilk.

Moms and caregivers want balanced information on breastfeeding and infant formula

61%

of moms and 51% of caregivers oppose health care professionals or the government restricting infant feeding information to breastfeeding only.

“It should be the mother’s decision and the information they [the government] provides should be factual and non-biased.”

“It’s the mother’s decision and nobody should feel pressured to feed how others think they should. But should also be given all the information they need [from the government] to make their decision on how to feed their baby.”

Moms and caregivers believe the government should provide **easy-to-understand** and **science-based** information and resources beyond just breastfeeding.

Moms and caregivers view the government as an important source of information on infant feeding

How important of a source is this for you when it comes to receiving information about feeding your baby?

	Very Important	Very/somewhat
Your baby's pediatrician	65	89
Your doctor or OBGYN	52	81
Lactation consultant	49	76
WIC website or clinic	43	66
Your family	38	69
Government websites like the CDC or HHS	32	59
Birth coach or doula	31	53
Your state's department of health website	26	54
Infant formula company materials	26	48
Your friends	22	55
Books or DVDs on pregnancy and maternity	22	52
The internet, YouTube videos, or podcasts	20	42
Social media	18	37
Magazines	14	32
Television and radio	14	32

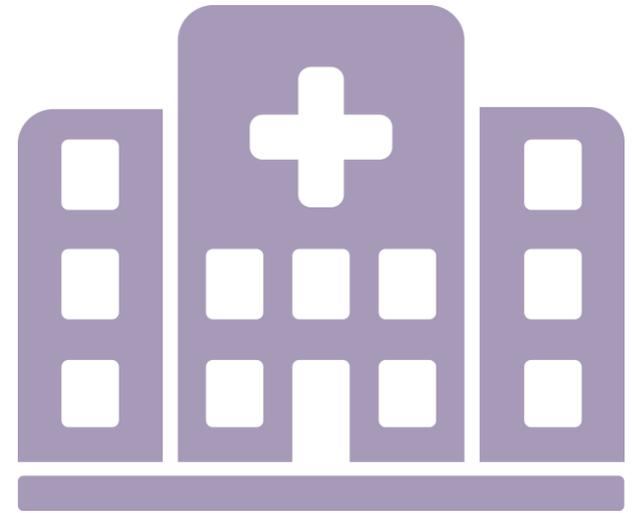
The majority of moms oppose restricting information about infant formula, from the government or in hospitals

8 out of 10

Moms believe breastfeeding and infant formula information should be provided to new moms and caregivers in the hospital.

9 out of 10

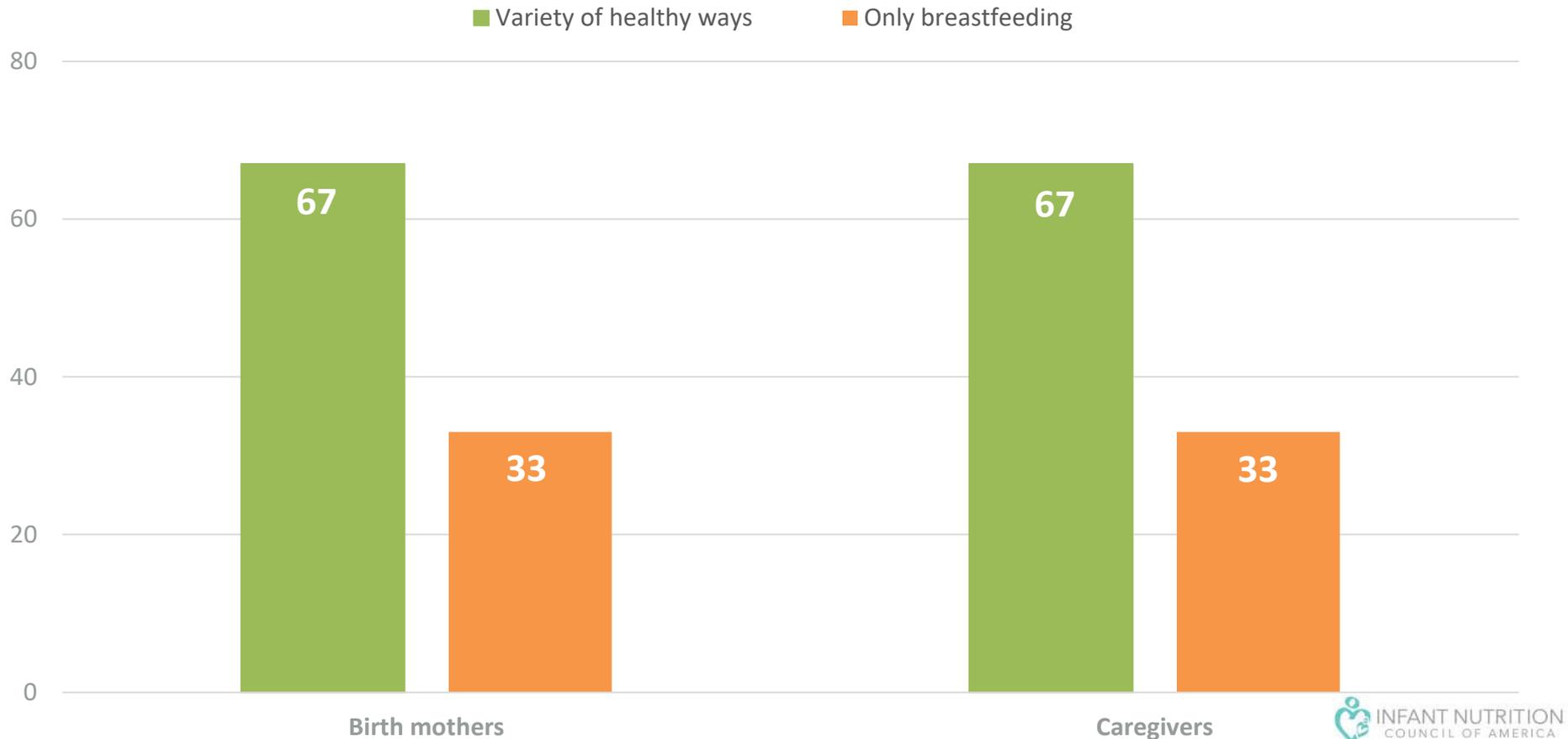
Moms believe that restricting use of, access to, or information about infant formula in the hospital would not have changed how long they breastfed.



Caregivers also believe that government should provide information beyond just breastfeeding

The government should provide information and resources on a variety of healthy ways parents and caregivers choose to feed infants, including breastfeeding and infant formula feeding.

The government should only promote breastfeeding feeding since it is the healthiest and most nutritious form of feeding infants.



Moms do not want to be judged on how they feed their baby and instead want support in making their decision

89%

of moms and 83% of caregivers assert that it's their decision on how to feed their baby.

2/3

of Moms and 1 out of 2 caregivers feel judged on their infant feeding choices.

“Consider the mother's feelings. Most mothers know what is best for their babies.”



*Moms and caregivers do not want to feel **pressured** to breastfeed or formula feed, rather supported in the decisions they make to feed their infant.*

Majority of babies receive both breast milk and infant formula in the first year

Mothers and caregivers understand the benefits of breastfeeding. Mothers who can, follow through with initiating breastfeeding.

70%

of infants receive infant formula at some point in the first year

29%

of moms and 21% of caregivers feed breastmilk only



39%

of moms and 41% of caregivers feed a combination of breastmilk and infant formula



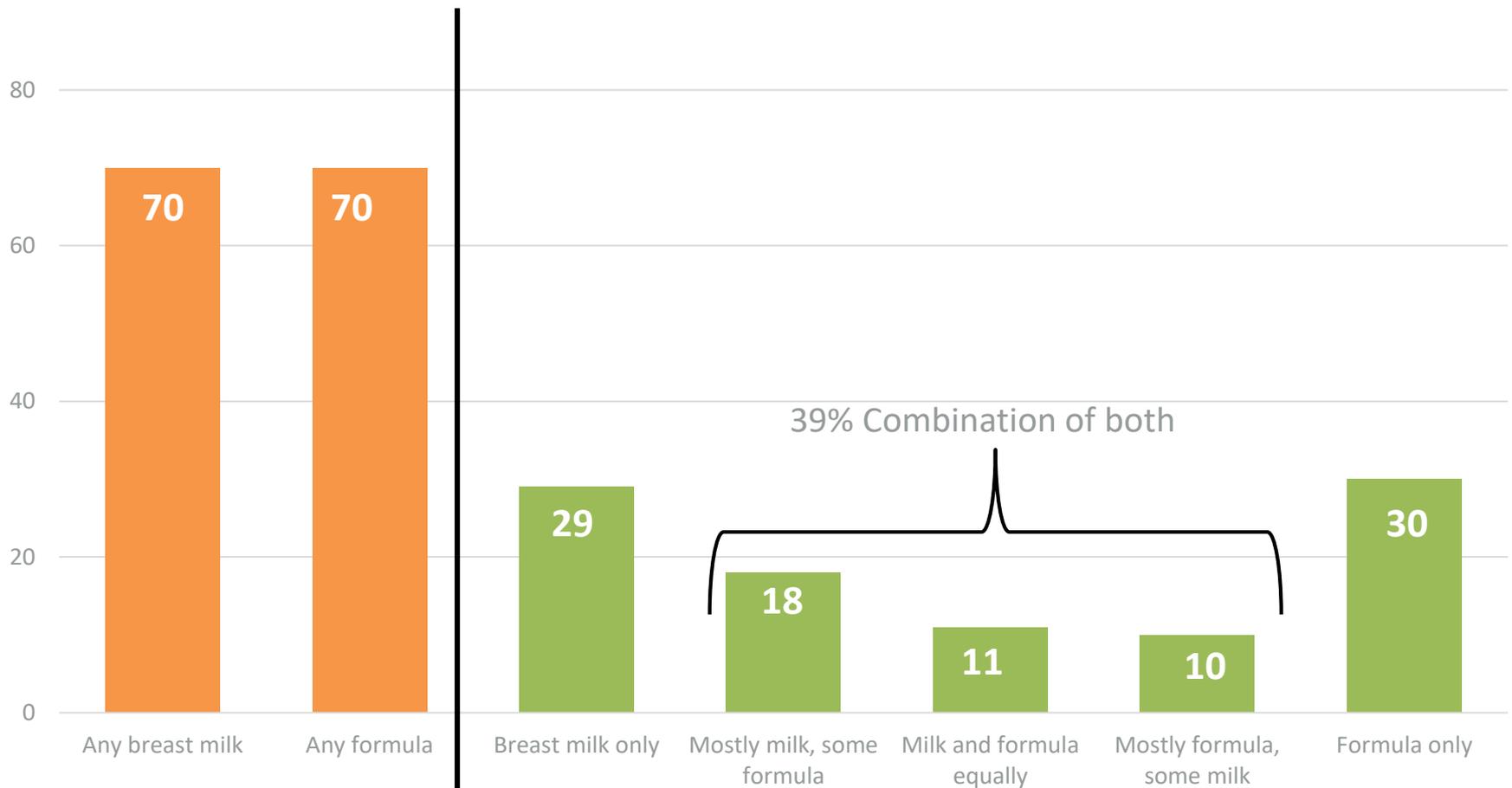
30%

of moms and 32% of caregivers feed infant formula only

*Most mothers want to breastfeed, but encounter **barriers** potentially impacting their infant's health and preventing them from initiating or continuing.*

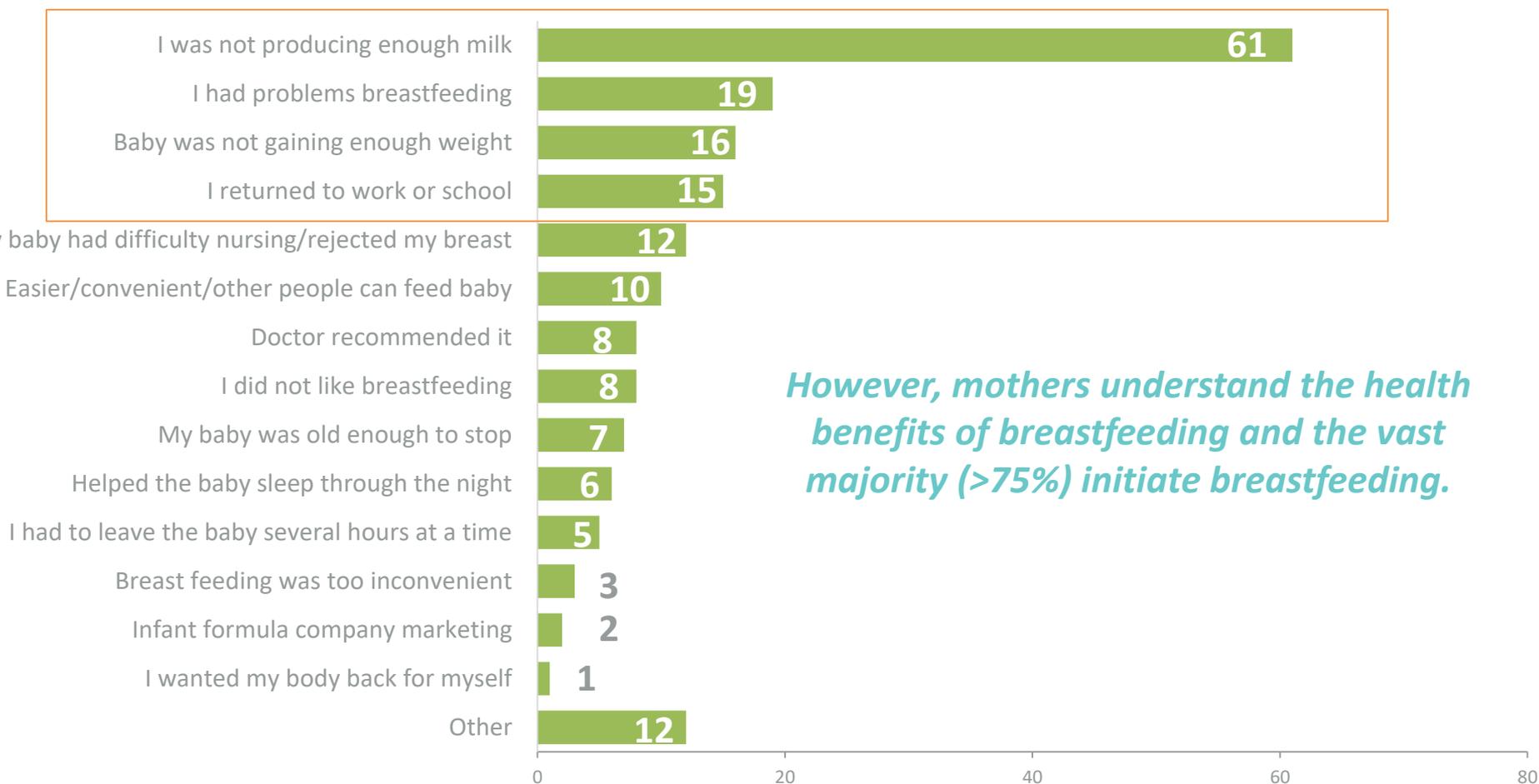
Most moms feed at least some breast milk

Which of the following describes what you feed your infant?



The primary reasons mothers introduce infant formula are health and nutrition related

From the options below, what would you say is the primary reason you stopped feeding your baby breast milk?



However, mothers understand the health benefits of breastfeeding and the vast majority (>75%) initiate breastfeeding.

Moms and caregivers need greater awareness of the risks related to non-recommended infant feeding options

Parents and caregivers need to be aware of the risks related to non-recommended infant feeding options.

51%

of moms and 58% of caregivers view homemade or non-store bought formula as non-risky.

62%

of moms and 57% of caregivers view sharing breastmilk as non-risky.

Providing accurate, balanced information helps avoid risky feeding practices.

Summary

Mothers and caregivers want *options* and *balanced* information when it comes to choosing how to feed their infant.

Key Findings

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2. Moms and caregivers view the **government** as an important source of information on infant feeding and believe the government should provide balanced guidance on both breastfeeding and infant formula.
3. While mothers understand the benefits of breastfeeding, the majority of moms **oppose restricting** information about infant formula, from either the government or in the hospital setting.
4. While the vast majority of babies receive both breast milk and infant formula, most moms **feel judged** for how they feed their baby, regardless of whether they breastfeed or use formula.
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For more information on the Infant
Feeding Survey, visit
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