

Labor, Childbirth, and Breastfeeding

Written by [Laurel Haring](#) Monday, September 01 2008 16:39



Who says that labor ends when the baby is delivered? Breastfeeding a child is W-O-R-K, no matter how you look at it. However, if you love your “job,” you’ll never feel like you’re working.

Today as I was sitting in the backyard with my laptop, working on a freelance job, I took a little mini-break to think about what possible connections there might be between breastfeeding and [Labor Day\[1\]](#).

Naturally, I thought of every mother’s “labor day” and the work that goes into it. It doesn’t matter how you deliver your baby, we all have to labor to do it. If your children are adopted, quite a bit of labor (and pain and joy) goes into the process until you can hold your child in your arms. Foster parents perform a labor of love by caring for children that need stable, loving homes, either for the short term or the long haul. Birth parents who make the difficult decision to allow another person or couple to raise their child face a different kind of labor of love – but the effort is both laborious and loving.

Women who choose to nurse their children know going into it that it will take extra effort on their part compared to bottle-feeding (which, as we all know, is pretty labor intensive in its own right). A nursing mom needs to watch what she eats and drinks. She needs to get as much rest as she’s able, but more than that would be just lovely.

Nursing mothers invest in nursing bras and often in special nursing tops and commit to wearing both for who knows how long, forgoing her pre-pregnancy tops for just a while longer. She may have to contend with engorged breasts when her milk comes in. Her nipples may become sore during the period when she and her baby are learning how to be a nursing pair. Her breasts may leak at the most inopportune of times.

A nursing mother may have read about but still be taken by surprise when her libido takes an extended vacation. Although this doesn’t happen with all nursing moms, the fatigue that goes with recovering from pregnancy, labor, and delivery, to say nothing of caring for a newborn, sure can put a damper on romance.

Part of the work a woman takes on when she decides to nurse is dealing with comments about her decision – comments from friends, family, colleagues, and absolute strangers. Regardless of how she deals with this sort of input, it still requires effort and can be emotionally draining.

Sometimes a woman who would love nothing more than to nurse her baby can't nurse. The reasons are hers alone, as is the sorrow she feels. Dealing with her emotions at this time is nothing if not laborious.

And let's not forget the man or partner in a nursing mom's life. These individuals work right alongside the baby's mother, doing what they can to make the path a little smoother, a little easier ... a little less laborious.

So really, every day in a mother's life is a day of labor. My hat is off to all of us who work so hard in our role as "mom." And a tip of my hat to everyone everywhere who helps make a mom's job just a bit easier ... you know who you are.

Labor Day? More like labor days: days filled with the labor of love.

Laurel Haring is a writer and editor. She and her family live in Delaware. As a Capricorn, Laurel is used to working hard and working steadily toward her goals. Writing and submitting this article on time was one of her goals today.

[1] Labor Day is a U.S. federal holiday observed on the first Monday in September, in honor of workers (laborers) and their families. Traditionally, Labor Day is also celebrated by many Americans as the symbolic end of the summer.

<http://www.typeamom.net/labor-childbirth-and-breastfeeding.html>