**ODOMENE JUSTICE**

**17/SCI03/006**

**BCH308 ASSIGNMENT**

**Explain the suitability of human breast milk over cow milk.**

The composition of milk varies according to the animal from which it comes, providing the correct rate of growth and development for the young of that species, thus for human infants, human milk is obviously more suitable than cow’s milk. Indeed, the popular consensus among health care professionals is that ordinary cow’s milk, goat’s milk, condensed milk, dried milk, evaporated milk, or any other type of milk should not be given to a child under the age of one. This is because of differences in the composition of milk that have been revealed by research over the last decade or so. While cow’s milk and human milk contain a similar percentage of water, the relative amounts of carbohydrate, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals vary widely.

A substantial body of evidence shows that breastfeeding has important advantages for both infant and mother. Babies receive an important boost to their immune system in the first few days of breastfeeding as important antibodies are passed from the mother to the infant in the colostrum (the fluid expressed before the so-called true milk). These antibodies protect the baby from infection. But that is just the start of it; breastfed babies may have better neurological development than artificially fed infants. They may have better cholesterol and blood pressure levels. More research is needed, but breastfeeding may also provide protection against: multiple sclerosis, acute appendicitis and tonsillectomy. Numerous studies show that the risk of obesity in later life is reduced in people who breastfed as infants. Women who were breastfed as infants are at lower risk of: breast cancer, ovarian cancer, hip fractures and reduced bone density. Mothers who breastfeed their infants may have a lower risk of rheumatoid arthritis, type 2 diabetes and postnatal depression (UNICEF, 2013). On the other hand, artificially fed babies are at greater risk of: gastrointestinal infection, respiratory infections, necrotising enterocolitis, urinary tract infections, ear infections, allergies (eczema and wheezing), type 1 and type 2 diabetes, sudden infant death syndrome and childhood leukaemia.

Furthermore, breastfeeding is free. You do not need to wash and sterilise an endless number of bottles. You will not be up in the night mixing and testing the milk to see if it is cool enough; breast milk comes ready mixed at the perfect temperature. The act of breastfeeding is also important for bonding the mother and baby relationship.