



Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is the best way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of babies. It has many benefits for the infant and the mother.

Benefits of Breastmilk/Breastfeeding:

- It provides all the energy and essential nutrients from birth up to 6 months of life.
- The first few drops of breast milk called colostrum contains antibodies that protect babies against infectious and chronic diseases, such as diarrhea or pneumonia.
- It strengthens the bond between mother and child.
- It reduces the risk of ovarian and breast cancer of the mother.
- It helps space pregnancies due to the hormonal effect which often induces cessation of menstruation.

Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

Every facility providing maternity services and care for newborn infants should:

1. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health care staff.
2. Train all health care staff in skills necessary to implement this policy on breastfeeding within the first 6 months upon entry into the hospital.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding during prenatal consultations. After delivery, reiterate

breastfeeding benefits in the wards during postpartum period.

4. Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within half-an-hour of birth by placing the newborn on skin-to-skin contact.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if they should be separated from their infants.
6. Do not give newborn infants food or drink other than breast milk, unless medically indicated. Educate mothers on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding.
7. Practice rooming-in. That is, allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Do not give artificial teats or pacifiers (also called dummies or soothers) to breastfeeding infants.
10. Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them upon discharge from the hospital or clinic.

Complementary Feeding

Giving other foods in addition to milk after 6 months of age

- Feed slowly and patiently; encourage your baby to eat but do not force him/her.
- Practice good hygiene and proper food handling.
- Start at 6 months with small amounts of food and increase gradually as the child gets older.
- Feed a variety of nutritious foods.
- Continue breastfeeding on demand until 2 years old and beyond.

Breastfeeding Positions



Front hold or cradle position



Underarm position or footy hold



Lying down position

Laws that Protect and Support Breastfeeding

- *Executive Order No. 51: National Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*
This code calls for intensifying dissemination of information on breastfeeding and proper nutrition. It also calls for the regulation of advertising, marketing, distribution of breastmilk substitutes and other related products (including bottles and teats). It prohibits the use of health facilities and health workers in the promotion and marketing of the products covered by the code.
- *Republic Act No. 7600: The Rooming-In and Breastfeeding Act of 1992 (later amended by Republic Act No. 10028: Expanded Promotion of Breastfeeding Act)*
Rooming-in shall be observed within 30 minutes after birth. For normal deliveries,

breastfeeding should be done within an hour after birth and for Caesarean deliveries, 3-4 hours after birth to ensure support for early, exclusive, and continuous feeding.

- *The Philippine Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Policy as adopted from WHO and UNICEF*
The “2002 Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding” calls for a renewed and accelerated action toward the promotion of appropriate IYCF practices.
- *PHIC Circular No. 26 s. 2005: Mother-Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative*
As part of its accreditation requirements for all hospitals, this initiative encourages, supports, and promotes breastfeeding in the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels



of hospital facilities, recognizing that breastfeeding is essential for the health and well-being of the infant and the mother.

- *DOH Administrative Order No. 2005-0023: Formula One for Health as the Implementing Mechanism for Health Sector Reforms*

Breastfeeding Program is one of the priorities for Public Health Program Development.

- *1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 24)*

This article emphasizes the children's right to the highest attainable level of healthcare services and guarantees the provision of and access to adequate nutrition for all infants and young children.

References

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- Department of Health. (2010). Advantages of Breastfeeding. Retrieved from <http://www.doh.gov.ph/chd1/files/PDFs/health%20advisorie/breastfeeding.pdf>
- World Health Organization. Protecting, Promoting and Supporting Breastfeeding: The Special Role of Maternity Services, a joint WHO/UNICEF statement