

Importance Of Breast Milk, Breastfeeding Related To W.B.W (World Breastfeeding Week).

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Abstract-

India is a country with large population. Food, shelter, and clothes are the three basic needs of mankind. In a world filled with inequality, crisis and poverty, breastfeeding is the foundation of life for long good health. In this article, I have covered all information about breast milk/ breastfeeding, and W.B.W. i.e world breastfeeding week.

Keywords-Breastfeeding, breast milk, and world breastfeeding week(WBW).

Introduction-

In this article, I will focus on what is breastfeeding, breast milk (contents, advantages) and WBW step-by-step.

Definition of breast feeding:

Feeding of an infant or young child with breast milk directly from breasts is called breast feeding.

It is the optimal source of nutrition.

Statistics

Globally, only 38% of infants are exclusively breastfed.

Suboptimal breastfeeding contributes to 800,000 infant deaths.

Milk ejection basics: -

Prolactin & Oxytocin hormone release

Hormones trigger mammary gland to stimulate milk production & ejection.

Infant suckles at the breast

Stimulation of nerve ending in mother's nipple.

Contents of breast milk

- Breast milk is the only food that baby needs up to first six months.
- Exclusive breast feeding means neonate gets only breast milk & nothing else such as honey, water, juices or any other animal milk.

- Output & composition of BM changes throughout the lactation period to meet changing needs of growing infant.
- BM is easily digestible.
- BM contains all essential nutrients in the right quantity & quality as per body's requirement.

Colostrum:

- It is the milk secreted during the initial 3-4 days after delivery.
- It is in small quantity.
- It is yellow, thick & contains large amounts of antibodies, immune competent cells & vit. A,D,E & K.

Transitional Milk

- This is the milk secreted between 3rd to 15th day.
- In this the fat & sugar contents increases.
- The immunoglobulin & protein content decreases.

Mature milk

- It is secreted from 15th day onwards.
- It is thinner & watery but contains all the nutrients essential for optimal growth of the baby.
- It has lesser protein content than transitional milk, but more fats & caloric value.
- Composition of this milk also varies according to maternal diet.

Fore milk

- It is the milk secreted at the start of the feed.
- It is watery & is rich in proteins, sugar, vitamins, minerals & water that satisfy baby's thirst.

- It is with lesser fat content.

Hind milk

- It is secreted at the end of feed.
- It is thicker than fore milk & with higher fat content to satisfy baby's hunger & caloric needs.

Preterm milk

- It is the milk of a mother who delivers before 37 weeks.
- It contains more proteins, sodium, iron, immunoglobulins & calories as per the requirement of the preterm baby.

Advantages of breast milk

BM is species-specific i.e quantitatively & qualitatively most appropriate for human body.

There are many advantages which can be classified as follows-

1. Advantages due to Nutritional Superiority.
2. Advantages due to Anti-infective Properties.
3. Advantages to mother.
4. Advantages to baby.
5. Advantages to Family.
6. Advantages to the Community.

Advantages due to Nutritional Superiority

1. B.M. is easily digestible. Baby gets energy from easily digestible Carbohydrates.
2. As compare to cow's milk there is less protein content in B.M. till it is qualitatively superior due to easily digestible proteins in B.M.
3. Essential Amino Acids (EAA)
B.M. contains all the EAAs in appropriate concentration which is very useful for proper cognitive development.
4. There is high protein content in animal milk which increases risk of allergic disorders. It is due to absorption of macromolecules through immature gut mucosa.
5. Fat content of human milk & cow milk is same.

6. Vitamin contents in human milk is adequate (except vit K) while cow milk is deficient in vit C & D.

Due to low vitamin K content in B.M. there is risk of hemorrhagic disorders in newborn, so to prevent that Inj. Vit K should be given to new born baby.

7. Mineral level is much lower in B.M. as compare to Cow milk. Due to cow milk there is additional burden over developing kidneys of baby.
8. B.M. contains an adequate amount of water so no additional water is required in exclusively breast-fed babies.

Advantages due to Anti-Infective Properties

- Breast milk is basically sterile, except in presence of systemic or local (breast) maternal infection.
- Breast milk contains various anti-infective substances, so there are lower chances for G.I.T. & R.T. I. in breast fed infants.
- Breast Milk contains following anti - infective factors:

1. Humoral factors.
2. Cellular factors.
3. High Complement activity.
4. Organism-specific protective factors.
5. Others.

Advantages for the mother

- Breastfeeding helps to create a unique emotional bond between a mother and child.
- It is always available and is cheaper compared with bottle feed.
- Breastfeeding helps to reduce the post delivery depression.
- Breastfeeding releases oxytocin, a hormone which helps the uterus contract and return to its normal size more quickly and thus helps in reducing excessive bleeding after delivery.
- It helps lose weight faster.
- Breastfeeding reduces the risk of developing breast cancer, uterine and ovarian cancer also.

Advantages for baby

- Breast milk is the healthiest form of milk for babies.
- Breast milk is easily digestible and breast-fed babies tend to have less constipation and fewer

Human Milk	Cow Milk
Contains higher level of PUFA (Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids) and EFA (Essential Fatty Acids). It also contains lipase enzyme which is essential for fat absorption.	Cow milk is richer in saturated fats, are difficult to digest & also increase risk of heart disease, hypertension in adult life.

feeding problems compared to bottle-fed babies.

- Breast milk is useful in developing cognitive skills. The fatty acids in the breast milk help to develop baby’s brain.
- Breastfed babies are at lower risk of infections, diarrhoea, asthma, obesity, allergies, and colic.
- The antibodies in the breast milk develop baby’s immunity, which is responsible to fight sickness.
- Breast-fed babies have a significantly lower risk of a condition referred to as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) where typically the infant is found dead after having been put to bed, and exhibits no signs of suffering

Advantages to Family

- Breastfeeding is good from the economic point of view because of negligible cost except the hidden expenses for nutrition to mother.
- Less health care expenses due to less morbidity. Natural family spacing.
- **Advantages to the community**
Ecological benefits due to less consumption of natural resources for animal milk production i. e. fodder, boiling (fuel) & washing the utensils (water).
- Lesser morbidity & public health expenses.
- Population control.

Introduction of W.B.W.

- On 14th Feb. 1991, W.A.B.A. (World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action) was established.
- W.B.W. was first started & celebrated by W.A.B.A. (world Alliance for Breastfeeding Action) in 1992.
- Later it is being celebrated in more than 170 countries by UNICEF, W.H.O. & their participants such as individuals, associations & Government.
- W.H.O & W.A.B.A had decided a day committed to the breastfeeding & which is now the important international event.

W.B.W. is an annual celebration

Starts -----1st August.
 Ends ----- 7 August.
 Freq. ----- Yearly.
 Locations ----- Worldwide.

- It is the global network of individuals & organizations which concern with protection, promotion & support of breast feeding worldwide.
- WABA co-ordinates the annual W.B.W. campaign.

Aims of the breastfeeding campaign.

- To make aware the peer group to support mothers in order to establish and carry on the breastfeeding.
- To initiate the breastfeeding supporters to be trained to provide support to mothers and babies in more effective ways.
- To make aware the people to attend and expand the Peer Counselling programmes by letting them know the effective and efficient benefits of the Peer Counselling.
- To call in the governments to get more and worldwide maternity facilities in order to increase the rate and duration of breastfeeding.

Objectives of W.B.W

- Inform - To inform people about the links between good nutrition, food Security, poverty reduction & breast feeding.

Anchor - Breast feeding as the foundation of life.

Engage - To engage with individuals & organizations for greater impact.

Galvanise - Action to advance breast feeding as a part of good nutrition, food security & poverty reduction.

W.B.W. THEMES

As W.B.W. had started from 1992, the theme for every year.

I have taken last five years theme.

2014 -- “Breastfeeding: A Winning Goal -- For Life.”

2015 -- “Breastfeeding & Work -- Let's Make it Work.”

2016 -- “Breastfeeding -- A Key to Sustainable Development.”

2017 -- “Sustaining breastfeeding together.”

2018 -- “Breastfeeding: Foundation for life.”

2019 -- “Empower parents, Enable breastfeeding.”

Goals of W.B.W

- To protect, to promote, to support.
- These are the three main pillars of W.B.W. campaign.

How can we achieve these goals?

For this WHO & UNICEF advised ten steps for successful breast feeding

1. Hospitals should support mothers to breastfeed by -
Not promoting infant formula, bottles or teats, making breast feeding care standard practice, keeping track of support for breast feeding.
2. Staff Competency -
Hospitals should support mothers to breastfeed by - Training staff on supporting mothers to breastfeed, Assessing health workers knowledge & skills.
3. Antenatal care -
Hospitals should support mothers to breastfeed by - Discussing the importance of breastfeeding for babies & mothers, preparing women in how to feed their baby.
4. Care Right After Birth -
 - a. Encouraging skin-to-skin contact between mother & baby soon after birth, helping mothers to put their baby to the breast rightaway.
5. Support mothers with breastfeeding -
Checking positioning, attachment & sucking, giving practical breastfeeding support, Helping mothers with common breastfeeding problems.
6. Supplementing -
Giving only breast milk unless there are medical reasons.
Prioritizing donor human milk when a supplement is needed.
Helping mothers who want to formula feed to do safely.
7. Rooming - in -
Letting mothers & babies stay together day & night.
Making sure that mothers of sick babies can stay near their baby.
8. Responsive Feeding -
Helping mothers to know when their baby is hungry.
Not limiting breast feeding times.
9. Bottles, Teats & Pacifiers -
Referring mothers to community resources for breast feeding support.

Counsel mothers on the use & risks of feeding bottles, teats & pacifiers.

10. Discharge -
Referring mothers to community resources for breast feeding support.
Working with communities to improve breast feeding support services.

These are all about 10 important steps for

boosting of breast feeding up to discharge. But work is not completed. There is other information for family members & community.

1. When mother go home -

- Your health worker is there to give you confidence & support to continue breast feeding.
- Reassure to mother that breast milk is all that your baby needs for healthy growth, for the first six months.
- Help to mother to resolve any problems or concerns so that breast feeding is a positive experience.
- While breast feeding is natural, it can take time to learn & it really helps to get ongoing support from health workers or peer counsellors.

2. What family & friends can do -

- Provide emotional support & practical help e.g. to deliver groceries, cook meals, to clean the house etc.
- Take care of big brothers & sisters.
- Listen & be supportive, Boost mother's confidence in breast feeding.

3. What mother can do -

- Before your baby arrives, get all information about breast feeding.
- When your baby is born, try to give first breast feed within an hour.
- You will need help about breast feeding. Don't be afraid to ask for it.
- Make sure you get plenty of healthy food, water & rest.

4. What Dads can do -

- Help around the house. Reduce stress for your partner & make sure she gets enough rest.
- Burp the baby after a feed. Dad's chest is great for this.
- Care for the baby in ways other than feeding (Baths, Diaper changes, walks etc.)

5. What Law Makers Can Do -

- Ensure a minimum of 4 months paid maternity leave.
- Require employers to provide places & protected time for mothers to express (Pump) milk at work.
- Prevent discrimination against women & mothers in the work place.
- Breast feeding support at work helps to build a healthy society.

6. What Trade Unions Can Do -

- Inform women about their rights.
- Ensure breast feeding women's voices are heard through consultations & negotiations.
- Advocate for maternity provisions through collective agreements.
- Breast feeding support in the work place boosts staff morale.

7. What Employers Can Do -

- Respect national laws on paid maternity leave.
- Provide place & time to express (pump) milk.
- Provide options for mothers
 - On-Site child care
 - Flexible work schedules
 - Tele working
 - Part-Time work
 - Let mothers bring their babies to work.
- Breast feeding support in the work place saves business Money.

8. What Co- Workers Can Do-

- Be supportive of the mother who needs time & flexibility to Breast feed.
- Encourage new mothers with a positive, accepting attitude.
- Recognize that the months, after having a baby are special.
- Breast feeding support in work place makes a difference to a Working parent.

In this way WHO organized some strategies to support mother to breastfeed anytime, anywhere so that we can all help to make Society Breast Feeding Friendly.

Conclusion-

Really, breast milk is very important for an infant. Breast milk is the foundation for the coming generations to be healthy physically as well as mentally. Not a single formulated milk can be substituted for breast milk. Organizing W.B.W is the best and the most social way to spread awareness about breastfeeding among people.

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