

## CHALLENGES DURING BREAST FEEDING

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### ABSTRACT

Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival. However, contrary to WHO recommendations, fewer than half of infants under 6 months old are exclusively breastfed. Breastmilk is the ideal food for infants. It is safe, clean and contains antibodies which help protect against many common childhood illnesses. Breastmilk provides all the energy and nutrients that the infant needs for the first months of life, and it continues to provide up to half or more of a child's nutritional needs during the second half of the first year, and up to one third during the second year of life. Breastfed children perform better on intelligence tests, are less likely to be overweight or obese and less prone to diabetes later in life. Women who breastfeed also have a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers.

**KEYWORDS:** Breast feed, Breast milk.

### INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is crucial for the survival, nutrition and development of infants and young children and the health of mothers. Breast milk protects new-borns from infections, helps develop immunity, is beneficial for digestion and optimal growth, and breastfeeding has been found to improve the closeness of mother and baby, while direct physical contact with the mother contributes to a sense of security and later psychosocial development of a child. On the other hand, breastfeeding mothers are less likely to develop breast cancer and bring back their physical health and body shape easier. After giving birth, it is recommended to exclusively breastfeed a baby during the first six months and then continue with adding solid food, until 24 months or longer, if it suits both mother and baby.

### BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING

- **Convenience:** Parents who nurse their children do not have to pack bottles or formula.
- **Affordability:** Breastfeeding is free, although a pump and bottles can increase the cost.
- **Safety:** Breast milk is always clean, safe, and exactly the right temperature. Formula is safe. However, a parent must mix it with clean water. In some areas, it can be difficult to access safe drinking water.

- The metabolites (small molecules) in breast milk can influence an infant's digestive system, immune system, and more. It may also prevent the child from following infections-
- respiratory infections
- ear infections
- asthma
- allergies
- obesity
- type 1 diabetes
- gastrointestinal infections
- sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

### BREASTFEEDING CHALLENGES

Breastfeeding is the only way for infants to gain the best immunity system. This has to start right from day 1. Due to a lack of awareness of the best practices of breastfeeding and unable to handles the pain for a long time by mothers, infants are lacking in having breastfeeding.

To overcome these situations there are a couple of best practices to follow by mothers to produce enough milk for their babies.

- 1) **Sore Nipple:** Most of the mothers after delivery experience some sort of sore nipples during the first week. This is a crucial time to manage and feed babies with breast milk properly. Ensure your baby

latches on correctly. After each feeding use the figure to break the suction to prevent sore nipple. If it is not happening as said, it may cause breast swollen and pain.

- 2) **Discomfort** due to the sore nipple can manage by placing ice or frozen peace against the sore nipple. Letting your nipple dry during the feeding gaps will also helpful. At the starting of breastfeeding baby usually sucks more actively, so make sure to avoid sore nipple while starting breastfeeding.
- 3) **Using perfumes and soaps** makes nipples become drier and sometimes may experience cracked nipples, so better to avoid soaps and perfumes which will cause more dryness.
  - Changing clothes of yours frequently and using cotton clothes most of the time will help to reduce the chances of sore nipples.
- 4) **Breast Infections** - Breast infections happen occasionally due to bacteria enters into the breast. This happens due to various reasons. The sore nipple is one of the reasons for breast infections. Breast infections may lead to flu, fever and fatigue. When recognized any symptoms, it is important to consult a doctor. Breast tenderness can be relieved by applying moist heat, at least 15 to 20 minutes.
- 5) **Stressbusters** - Stress is another major issue face by most of mothers after delivery. This is because of excessive hormonal imbalance. Controlling stress levels before starting breastfeeding will enhance milk production. Stay relaxed as much as possible, before and while feeding baby.
- 6) A fungal infection, also called a yeast infection or thrush, can form on your nipples or in your breast. This type of infection thrives on milk and is an overgrowth of the *Candida* organism. *Candida* lives in our bodies and is kept healthy and at the correct levels by the natural bacteria in our bodies. When the natural balance of bacteria is upset, *Candida* can overgrow, causing an infection.

A key sign of a fungal infection is sore nipples that last more than a few days, even after your baby has a good latch. Or you may suddenly get sore nipples after several weeks of pain-free breastfeeding. Other signs are pink, flaky, shiny, itchy, or cracked nipples or deep pink and blistered nipples. You could also have achy breasts or shooting pains deep in the breast during or after feedings.

Causes of fungal infection include.

- Thrush in your baby's mouth, which can pass to you
  - Nipples that are sore or cracked
  - Receiving or taking antibiotics or steroids (often given to mothers during labor)
  - A chronic illness like HIV, diabetes, or anemia
- 7) Some women have nipples that turn inward instead of pointing outward or are flat and do not protrude. Nipples can also sometimes flatten for a short time because of engorgement or swelling from breastfeeding. Inverted or flat nipples can sometimes make it harder to breastfeed. For breastfeeding to

work your baby must latch on to both the nipple and the breast, so even inverted nipples can work just fine. Often, flat and inverted nipples will protrude more over time as the baby sucks more.

- Very large nipples can make it hard for the baby to get enough of the areola into his or her mouth to compress the milk ducts and get enough milk.
- 8) A nursing "strike" is when your baby has been breastfeeding well for months and then suddenly begins to refuse the breast. A nursing strike can mean that your baby is trying to let you know that something is wrong. This usually does not mean that the baby is ready to wean (stop breastfeeding totally).
    - Not all babies will react the same way to the different things that can cause a nursing strike. Some babies will continue to breastfeed without a problem. Other babies may just become fussy at the breast. And other babies will refuse the breast entirely.

Some of the major causes of a nursing strike include:

- Having mouth pain from teething, a fungal infection like thrush, or a cold sore
- Having an ear infection, which causes pain while sucking or pressure while lying on one side
- Feeling pain from a certain breastfeeding position, perhaps from an injury on the baby's body or from soreness from an immunization
- Being upset about a long separation from the mother or a major change in routine
- Being distracted while breastfeeding, such as becoming interested in other things going on around the baby
- Having a cold or stuffy nose that makes breathing while breastfeeding difficult
- Getting less milk from the mother after supplementing breastmilk with bottles or overuse of a pacifier
- Responding to the mother's strong reaction if the baby has bitten her while breastfeeding
- Being upset by hearing arguing or people talking in a harsh voice while breastfeeding
- Reacting to stress, overstimulation, or having been repeatedly put off when wanting to breastfeed

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