

10 STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING



STEP 1

Have a written infant feeding policy that is routinely communicated to all health staff

A written Policy provides guidance for staff performing duties on how to support mothers to successfully breastfeed their children.

All Members of staff or community members working at the Health Facility should be oriented in the promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding.



STEP 2

Train all health care staff in skills necessary to implement this policy

Health workers are required to have the necessary knowledge and skills to assist mothers to successfully breastfeed.

All members of staff and community workers working at the Health Facility or in the community should be trained in skills necessary to promote, protect and support breastfeeding.



STEP 3

Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of Breastfeeding

All pregnant and lactating mothers attended to at the Health Facility or in the community should be taught on the benefits and management of breastfeeding.

Information on management of breastfeeding such as what to do when a mother thinks she does not have enough milk will go a long way in helping mothers successfully breastfeed.



STEP 4

Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within an hour of birth

Assist all mothers to initiate breastfeeding within the first hour of delivery.

Initiating breastfeeding early helps establish breastfeeding and also helps baby to benefit from the first milk which is rich in antibodies and nutrients.

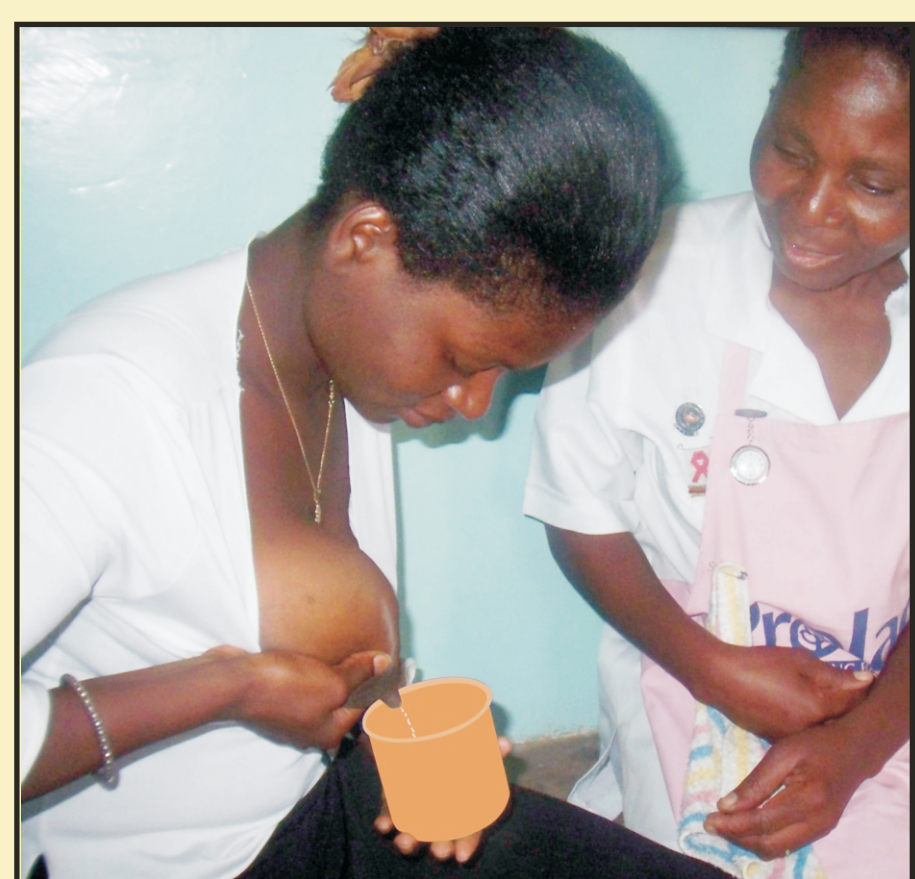


STEP 5

Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they should be separated from their infants

Demonstrate to mothers on how to breastfeed and maintain lactation even when mother and baby are separated.

The skills that mothers learn such as expression of breastmilk are very useful in maintaining the milk flow.



STEP 6

Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breast milk, unless medically indicated

All newly born babies should only be breastfed unless medically indicated. This means that NO other FOOD nor DRINK shall be fed to the baby for the first six months of life APART FROM BREASTMILK.

Giving babies aged 0 to 6 months other foods or drinks interferes with the success of maintaining the milk flow. It also puts the baby at risk of other infections that may result in diarrhoea.



STEP 7

Practice rooming-in: allow mothers and infants to remain together 24 hours a day

Allow all mothers to stay with their newborn babies at all times even when the mother or the baby is sick, unless medically indicated.



STEP 8

Encourage breastfeeding on demand

All lactating mothers should breastfeed their babies on demand i.e. as much as the baby wants. In addition, where babies sleep for too long, mothers should wake them up and breastfeed.

Demand feeding helps increase and maintain the milk flow.



STEP 9

Give no artificial teats or pacifiers to breastfeeding infants

No baby shall be given any artificial teats or pacifiers.

Artificial teats interfere with breastfeeding and are possible sources of infections such as diarrhoea.



STEP 10

Foster the establishment of breastfeeding support groups and refer mothers to them on discharge from hospital or health centre

Form breastfeeding support groups and strengthen their operations by referring mothers to them.

Breastfeeding support groups provide assistance and support to mothers in the community.



ADDITIONAL AREAS

Comply with the Marketing of breast milk substitutes legislation and the international Code

All health facilities should comply with the Law that regulates the marketing of breast milk substitutes. This will protect mothers and caretakers from undue pressure imposed by manufacturers and agents of baby foods.

Encourage all pregnant women to test for HIV and provide them with appropriate support on infant feeding

All pregnant and lactating women shall be encouraged to test for HIV so that appropriate support is given to both the mother and the baby and family at large.

Promote Mother Friendly Care practices

All mothers shall be assisted to have labour and delivery practices that will enhance their own health and also their infants' good start in life, including breastfeeding.