Breastfeeding: A winning goal for life

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND MAKING AN EMPOWERED CHOICE

World Health Organization
Western Pacific Region
WHO recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months, followed by continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary feeding until two years or beyond.

Unfortunately, many obstacles impede mothers from making empowered choices. Thus, babies do not receive optimal nutrition in the early critical years. WHO urges Member States to protect, promote and support breastfeeding, and in doing so, enable families to overcome obstacles.
The newborn is not placed on the mother’s chest immediately (within 30 seconds) after birth.

Overcoming the Obstacle

Promote the first embrace: a healthy start for every newborn. Skin-to-skin contact with the mother immediately after birth keeps babies pink, warm, calm and healthy. Early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding is easier and transfers essential nutrients, antibodies and immune cells through colostrum — the first milk form the mother’s breast.
The baby food industry manipulates policies and practices. It creates a positive public image and denies wrongdoing. They provide incentives for health workers to distribute product samples that discourage women from breastfeeding.

OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLE

Policy-makers and health workers need to be aware of industry tactics that undermine the promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding.
THE SMART FORMULA FOR SMART BABIES

whiz kids

INFANT FORMULA

0-6 MONTHS

Specially formulated with BRAIN ENHANCING NUTRIENTS
Best for your baby's brain development

MOMS & PEDIATRICIANS' NO. 1 CHOICE!
Baby food is marketed aggressively. Labels promote “high grade” formulas at higher prices. Packaging often displays misleading and unsubstantiated claims that impress — but also confuse — the buyer.

OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLE

All Member States in the Western Pacific Region have ratified the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which provides normative guidance and establishes legal obligations in relation to child health and nutrition, including breastfeeding. Countries are encouraged to fully adopt, enforce and monitor the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions.
Mothers often go back to work after having a baby. Combining work and breastfeeding is still an obstacle. Most countries do not provide work environments that enable mothers to continue to breastfeed.

OVERCOMING THE OBSTACLE

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has a “Maternity Protection Convention” that calls for paid maternity leave and paid breastfeeding breaks. Countries in the Western Pacific Region are encouraged to ratify the ILO Convention and pass legislation on maternity protection, including providing safe and private facilities to enable mothers to breastfeed or pump her milk.
Parents of newborn babies often hear well-intentioned advice from their peers, friends and parents. This can be confusing.

Overcoming the Obstacle

It is important to continue to raise awareness about the benefits of breastfeeding and to challenge prevailing myths.
Breastfeeding is the best way of providing optimal nutrition for babies. Virtually all mothers have enough milk and can breastfeed, if they are given the right information and the support of their families and communities. Let’s ensure a healthy start for every child by promoting breastfeeding and score a winning goal for life!
Governments are encouraged to implement the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (endorsed by WHO Member States in 2002). The strategy calls for action to ensure that every facility providing maternity services fully practices the 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.
3. Inform all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
4. Help mothers initiate breastfeeding within a half-hour of birth.
5. Show mothers how to breastfeed, and how to maintain lactation even if they should be separated from their infants.
6. Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breastmilk, unless medically indicated.
7. Practice rooming-in — allow mothers and infants to remain together — 24 hours a day.
8. Encourage breastfeeding on demand.
9. Give no 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 on discharge from the hospital or clinic.
Additional Resources

Nutrition in the Western Pacific:
http://www.wpro.who.int/nutrition/en/

Health Information and Intelligence Platform for Nutrition:
http://hiip.wpro.who.int/portal/Dashboards/Nutrition.aspx

WHO e-Library of Evidence for Nutrition Actions (eLENA):
http://www.who.int/lena/en/

Action plan for healthy newborn infants in the Western Pacific Region (2014-2020):

Early Essential Newborn Care Clinical practice pocket guide:

Contact

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