



# BREASTFEEDING: A BOON FOR MANKIND

## AUTHOR:

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## ABSTRACT :

Motherhood is a beautiful journey which is accompanied by major responsibilities. One such responsibility is to seek normal growth and development of the baby. Mother enriches her baby with nutrition rich food that is breast milk. It plays a vital role in infants early stage of life to fight against infection and in growth of the baby. Breastfeeding is best affordable and simplest method of fulfilling nutritional needs of the infants. Promoting early initiation of feed and maintaining exclusive breastfeeding can eliminate major health complication for both mother and the infant.

**Keywords:** Breastfeeding, Antenatal Preparations, Breastfeeding Positions, Exclusive Breastfeeding.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Breastfeeding is a natural process of providing nutrition to a newborn. It is a fundamental right of the child and a very vital ingredient for a newborn for growth and development. In tropical countries the two vital consideration for infants are breastfeeding and prevention of infection. There is no doubt that breast milk is the best milk for the baby. Breastfeeding can be done partial or exclusively. Nevertheless, exclusive breastfeeding is the best way to provide sufficient nutrition for the baby.

## **BENEFITS OF BREASTFEEDING:**

Breastfeeding is a natural method of feeding a baby directly from the mother's breast. Mothers of healthy baby should be encouraged to establish breastfeeding as soon as possible after the delivery. Health care

provider should be knowledgeable regarding advantages of breastfeeding and importance of breast milk. There are various benefits of breastfeeding. Some of the benefits are discussed below:

### **1. Benefits to Mother:**

- Helps in involution of the uterus.
- Delays pregnancy
- Lowers risk of breast, uterine and ovarian cancer

### **2. Benefits to Baby:**

- Complete food for the newborn
- Easily digestible and well absorbed
- Protects from infection
- Promotes bonding between mother and child
- Better brain development

### **3. Benefits to family and society:**

- Economical
- Aid in family planning
- Contributes in reducing vital statistics

## **ANTENATAL PREPARATION FOR BREASTFEEDING**

- Preparation of mother for breastfeeding should actually be started from mid pregnancy.
- Advice mothers to use comfortable clean brassiere to support the increasing weight.
- Instruction regarding massaging breast, expressing colostrum and maintaining cleanliness during last few weeks of pregnancy.
- Encourage mother to perform nipple rolling with thumb and index finger for 30 seconds for each breast everyday in the 9 month.
- It is essential to respect mothers opinions and belief as feeding can be affected by following factors such as religion, age, family beliefs, education etc.

## **TYPES OF BREASTFEEDING POSITIONS:**

Proper positioning of the baby while breastfeeding is essential. Proper positioning can be ensured by following steps: supporting baby's whole body, ensuring baby's head, neck, and back are in same plane, baby should face towards mother, baby's abdomen should touch the mother's abdomen. Following correct breastfeeding positioning will ensure effective sucking and also prevents breast complications. There are many types of breastfeeding position, some of them are:

## 1. Cradle position



This is the most common breastfeeding position used by all mothers. Infants head is supported by mother's elbow, the back and the buttock are supported by her arms and lifted towards the breast.

## 2. Football (Clutch) position



As the name of the position suggests holding the baby under the arm which resembles like holding a football where infants body is supported with the forearm and the head is supported with the hand. This position is usually uncomfortable for many mothers but is very good for mothers who have undergone C-Section, for premature baby and for mothers who are having large breast.

## 3. Side-lying Position



In this position, mother lies on one side and with the help of pillow head and shoulder are propped up and the infant also lying down facing mother for effective latching. Side lying position can be difficult to learn but can be initiated with cradle hold at a side of bed and slowly lower herself and baby to a lying down position.

#### 4. Cross Cradle Hold Position



This is the ideal position during early breastfeeding as infants neck need more support. Mother holds the infant crosswise in crook of the arm opposite the breast and baby's trunk and head are supported with the forearm and palm while the other hand is placed below the breast in a U shape to bring infants mouth to mother's breast for breastfeeding.

#### 5. Saddle position

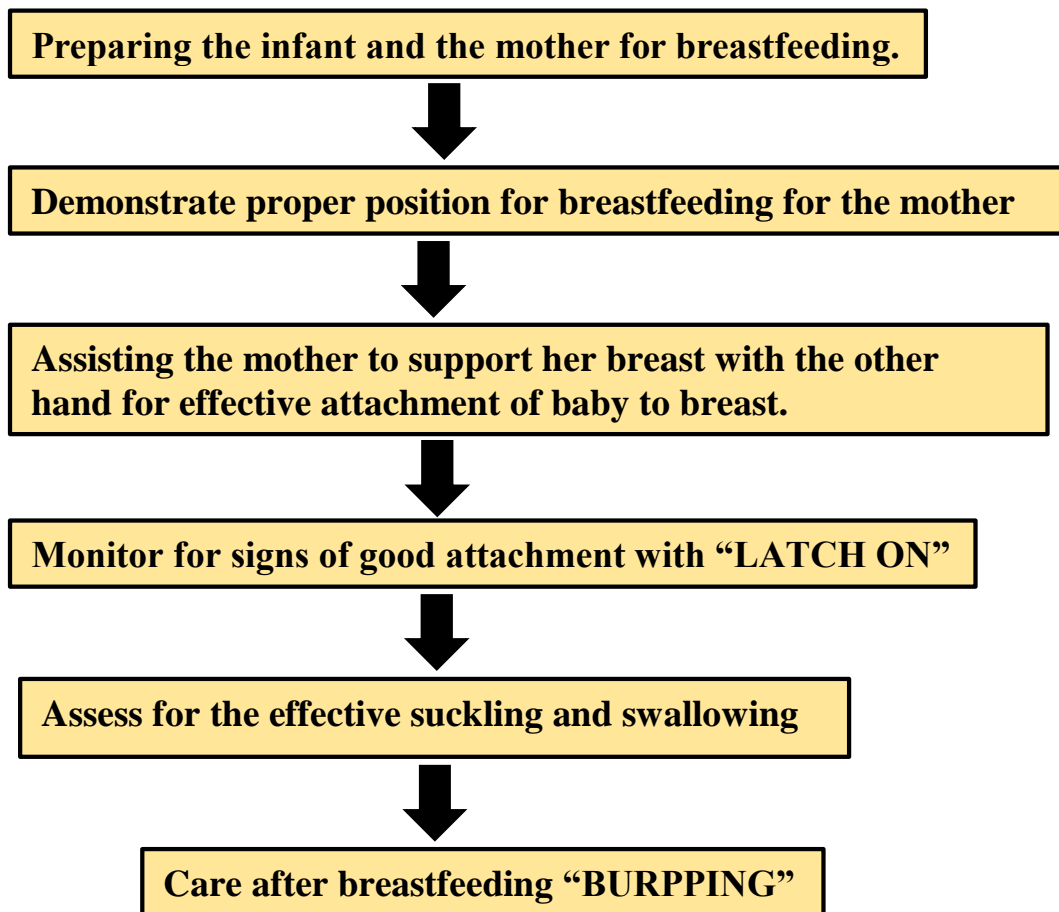


Saddle position is also known as Australian Hold Position. This position is not commonly practiced by the mothers but can be used in older infants with runny nose and in infants with ear infection.

**There are four signs of good attachment of baby on mother's breast**

- Baby's mouth will be wide open
- Lower lip will be turned outward
- Baby's chin will be touching mother's breast
- Majority of the areola will be inside infant's mouth.

## STEPS OF BREASTFEEDING PROCEDURE .



## BREASTFEEDING ADVICES FOR THE MOTHERS:

1. Keep the baby on mother's breast to feed as soon as possible after birth preferably in the delivery room.
2. First few days, colostrum that is thick, and yellowish breastmilk is secreted which very vital for the infant as it provides nutrition and prevents infection. Advice the mother "DO NOT DISCARD COLOSTRUM".
3. Infant should be mother side as it improves mother infant bonding.
4. Provide information regarding different types of breastfeeding position in order to establish effective feeding practice.
5. Encourage the mother to breastfeed baby at least eight to ten times during day and at night.
6. Mothers should be taught about how to increase the amount of feed for the baby
  - First 24 hours- 5ml/ feed.
  - Second 24 hours – 15ml / feed.
  - On 3<sup>rd</sup> Day- 100ml/ kg/24 hours
  - On 10<sup>th</sup> Day- 150ml/ kg/24 hours

7. Allow the baby to feed at one breast until he leaves the nipple on his own, if the baby continues to be hungry then feed the baby with other breast. For the normal growth of the baby it is necessary that the more the baby sucks at breast the more milk the breast will produce.
8. Advice and encourage the mother to only provide breast milk to the baby for the first 6 months.
9. Frequently assess the adequacy of breastfeeding
10. Avoid using bottle or pacifier for feeding the baby.

## **STORAGE OF BREASTMILK:**

Breastmilk can be stored:

- at room temperature for 6-8 hours.
- In an insulated cooler bag with icepack for 24 hours.
- In the refrigerator for about 5 days at 40° F, in freezer compartment for up to 2 weeks at 0-5° F and in deep freezer for about 3-12 months.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Globally, breastfeeding is the most concerning aspect. Breastfeeding a process of providing nutrition rich food for the infant. Early initiation of the breastfeeding is beneficial for both the mother and baby. Breast milk is essential for proper growth and development of the baby. It is necessary that health care worker should provide adequate knowledge to mother regarding importance of breastfeeding.

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