

## CHAPTER 3: BREASTFEEDING IN EARLY DAYS

- ⊗ Many a times baby is denied colostrum (initial breast milk) due to false beliefs as if it is indigestible; it can spoil the stomach, etc. colostrum is. Therefore, people often feed honey, cow's milk, glucose water etc., that too by cotton wick or cloth.
- 🌱\* Relatives and even some nurses and doctors feel that mother require rest after delivery; hence, do not start breastfeeding immediately.
- 😊 In reality, colostrum helps to fight diseases as it contains antibodies and can be called the first vaccine. It prevents diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and perhaps even malaria.
- 🌱\* Baby can get diarrhea, vomiting and colic etc. if hygiene is not maintained, while giving other foods. Faulty honey cause fatal disease like botulism.
- 🔔 Mother -child bonding is affected when baby is not put to the breast early.

### When to start breastfeeding?

After normal delivery clean the baby and keep it next to the mother in naked state, in the labour room itself. Put the baby to breast and allow

suckling. Allow at least one hour like this. The best time to start breastfeeding is 30 to 40 minutes after birth as baby is very alert at that time. On starting late, baby can take 4 to 5 days for established breastfeeding. Early breastfeeding prevents constipation and jaundice. Baby suckling frequent gives two major advantages, first augmentation of breast milk production, second mother will have reduction in blood loss after childbirth.



## **POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND WHILE BREASTFEEDING.**

Breastfeeding should be a pleasurable experience for both child and mother. Anxiety on the part of mother can create difficulties. Keep following points in mind.

### **Wait till baby cries of hunger?**

Mother should not wait until the baby cries. Baby crying because of hunger is irritable and cranky and may not breast feed at all. Crying is baby's last resort. Before that, it makes sucking & smacking noises, open and closes lip, tries to search for nipple and tries to put things in mouth. On finding these signs baby should be breast-fed.



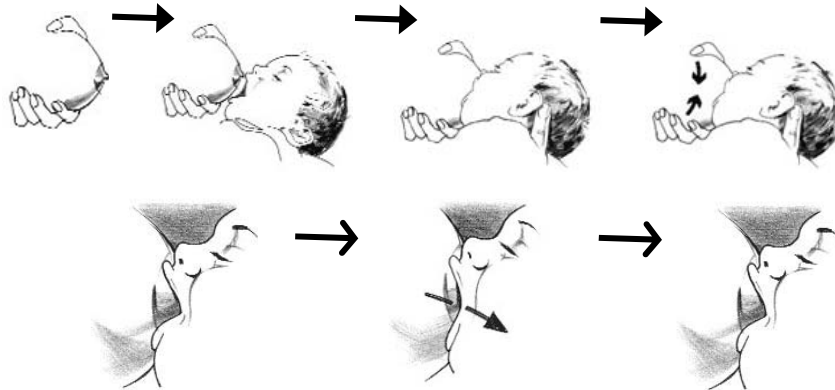
### **Which position is best suited?**

- ⊗ Many beliefs are prevalent. Breast-feeding can be done in any position lying down, supine or on the side, sitting etc. Mother should be comfortable during nursing (see sketches in the adjacent page).
- ⊗ Sometimes mother adopts uncomfortable and tiring postures. Mother should get adequate rest for back, hips, and hands.
- ⚡ While breastfeeding, the breast should fall towards the baby so that baby do not have to pull at the nipples and induce injury to them. To keep the baby close to the breast, give support as necessary.
- ✓ Support baby's head while feeding. Its chin should touch the breast.
- ✓ Baby's chest should touch mother's chest. Ideally, child's earlobe, shoulder, and hip should be in a single line. Its head should be above the level of stomach.
- ☺ It is not necessary to press the breast with finger to prevent baby's nose pressing against the head, as this will lead to nipple coming out of child's mouth.



## Giving nipple to the baby

Mother should seat comfortably & give nipple directly into the baby's mouth. Alternatively, touch baby's cheek with it (then baby will automatically turn towards the nipple). Hold breast with thumb on top and fingers below (see diagram below). Touch baby's lips by the nipple and when mouth is sufficiently open nipple should be inserted in such a way that *areola* (the dark part around the nipple) *also* goes in (see diagram). When baby is breastfeeding properly, it sucks forcefully and slowly on the nipple. Shift to other breast when this slows down.



## Releasing the nipple

When the baby is satisfied and full, it will let go of the nipple on its own. Otherwise, by inserting little finger into its mouth loosen the sucking grip before pulling out the nipple. If pulled forcefully it can induce injury.



## If baby sleeps during breastfeeding

by pressing breast, milk will squirt out and baby will wake up. Alternatively, tapping the heel, tickling the earlobe or chin can also make the child wake up.

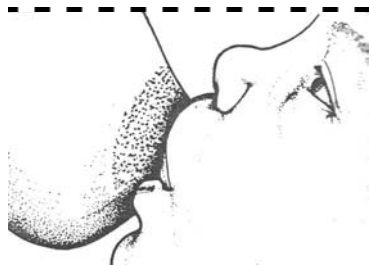


## IMPORTANT TIPS FOR BREAST FEEDING

### WRONG:



- ◆ While giving the nipple to the baby it is held between thumb and forefinger.

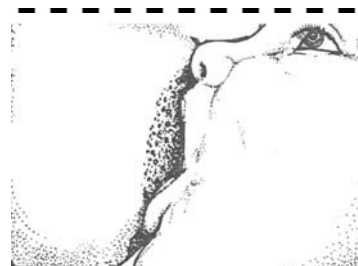


- ◆ Baby's lower lip is not turned outward but is inward.
- ◆ Baby's mouth not fully open so that major part of areola is outside.
- ◆ Baby's chin is at a distance from the breast.

### RIGHT:

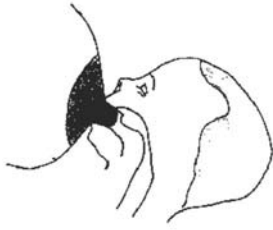


- ◆ Finger should be kept below the breast and areola should be supported.



- ◆ Lower lip fully open and everted pressed against breast.
- ◆ Most of the areola is inside the mouth.
- ◆ Chin is pressed to the breast.

### WRONG

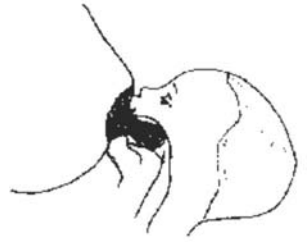


- ◆ Force of sucking is applied to the nipple.
- ◆ Nipple is inside only up to lips or gums of baby.



- ◆ Mother gets pain during breastfeeding.
- ◆ Mother's attention is diverted.
- ◆ Breast is not sloping towards baby and baby has to pull the breast.
- ◆ Mother's sitting position is uncomfortable.

### RIGHT



- ◆ Force applied to areola.
- ◆ Nipple is inserted deep up to palate of baby.



- ◆ Mother has no pain.
- ◆ Mother's attention is fully on baby.
- ◆ Baby's chest and abdomen are in contact with the mother's body. Baby does not pull the breast.
- ◆ Mother is fully comfortable.

## Burping the baby



Many times a very hungry baby swallows air with milk, & brings it out as belching / burping along with milk. To prevent this, after each feed support the baby on your shoulder and pat it on the back until burping occurs.

### **If baby does not suckle for long, does it mean that it does not like breast milk?**

Initially even if baby suckles for short periods, it is enough. It is not a sign of dislike of breast milk. It is a learning process. Do not switch to bottle feeding out of fear.

***CAN WATER BE GIVEN, IN ADDITION TO BREAST MILK, DURING FIRST 6 MONTHS?***

No, do not give even water. Even during hot summer months, breast milk provides adequate water. Rarely, if during summer baby is irritable, urine output drops and body gets hot, previously boiled and cooled water can be given.

⚠ Similarly do not give gripe water, indigenous medicines, etc.

☛ Bad quality contaminated water can cause diarrhea.

***WHAT TO DO IF  
INITIAL BREAST MILK IS INADEQUATE?***

Breast milk quantity is less for 2 to 4 days after delivery. This is especially true for first pregnancy & operative delivery like caesarean, forceps, and episiotomies (which causes pain).

☛ Therefore people give other foods like honey, jaggery, water, distilled water, milk etc. These things are not required and can cause infection.

✓ Baby gets enough breast milk for its needs. Therefore, frequently breastfeed the child so that quantity of breast milk increases.