

सत्यमेव जयते

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
Government of India



Help us to  
help you

# INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING DURING COVID-19



**Start to breastfeed** the child **within one hour of birth** and **exclusively breastfeed for 6 months**

- Breastfeeding **protects newborns from getting sick**
- Breastfeeding helps to protect newborns **throughout their infancy and childhood**
- Breastfeeding is particularly effective against infectious diseases as it **strengthens the immune system of a child by directly transferring antibodies from the mother**

## CONTINUE BREASTFEEDING WITH PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT FROM INFECTIONS!

If breastfeeding mother has symptoms like fever, cough or difficulty in breathing she should:



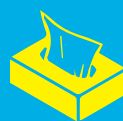
Seek **early medical care**



Follow **instructions** of the healthcare provider



Use a **mask** when near the child



Cover nose and mouth with **handkerchief/tissue** while sneezing and coughing



Wash hands for at least **40 seconds with soap and water** after coughing and sneezing, before and after contact with the child including feeding



Routinely **clean/disinfect any surface she has touched** by cleaning with soap or alcohol based sanitizer

If mother is too ill to breastfeed, she can express her milk in a properly cleaned container and feed it to the child with a clean cup or spoon

### Before expressing milk



Wash hands for **40 seconds** with soap and water



Properly **clean the cup or container** for expressed milk with soap and water

### While feeding expressed milk



Wear a **mask**



Feed expressed milk with a **properly cleaned cup or spoon**



If mother is too sick to breastfeed or express breastmilk, she should explore the possibility of:

- **Relactation:** (restarting breastfeeding after a gap)
- **Wet nursing:** (another woman breastfeeding or caring for your child)

If the infant or young child becomes sick with suspected, probable, or confirmed COVID-19 or any other illness, mothers should continue breastfeeding

For baby's rapid growth and brain development, on completion of 6 months caregivers should :



**At 6 Months:** 2-3 spoons per meal, 2-3 times a day  
**6 to 9 months:** Half a katori per meal, 2-3 times a day and one healthy snack  
**9 to 12 months:** 3/4 katori per meal, 3-4 times a day and two healthy snacks  
**1 to 2 year:** 1 katori per meal, 3-4 times a day and two healthy snacks

- 1 Start complementary food along with breast milk
- 2 Make child's every bite count by feeding the child a variety of foods such as pulses, milk and milk products, yellow, orange and green vegetables and fruits
- 3 If fresh foods are not available due to lockdown, identify healthy food options, limit highly processed foods that are typically high in saturated fat, sugars and salt, and avoid sugary drinks
- 4 Wash hands with soap and water before cooking, feeding and eating
- 5 Clean the food preparation area with soap and water
- 6 Wash child's hands with soap and water before feeding
- 7 Feed the child from a separate bowl
- 8 Use a properly cleaned bowl and spoon to feed the child
- 9 Feed children usual amount of foods and fluids more often during illness and increase the amount of food after illness



Delay in introduction of complementary foods affects the child's physical and brain growth and increases the risk of undernutrition



Whether or not the mother or infant has suspected, probable, or confirmed COVID-19, Health Facility Staff must ensure:

- Infant should be fed according to standard infant and young child feeding guidelines, keeping in mind the necessary hygiene precautions
- Breastfeeding counseling, basic psychosocial support and practical feeding support to all pregnant women and mothers with infants and young children
- Mother and infant should remain together, and practice skin-to-skin contact especially, straight after birth to establish breastfeeding
- Not to promote breast milk substitutes, feeding bottles, teats, pacifiers or dummies in any part of your facilities, or by any of your staff

**Note:** The content has been jointly developed by WHO, UNICEF, World Bank, Piramal Foundation, Alive & Thrive and Nutrition International.

**Reference:** WHO EMRO | Breastfeeding advice during the COVID-19 outbreak 23 March 2020

**Stay protected!**

**Stay safe from Novel Coronavirus!**

Contact **24X7** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Helpline

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