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CONCEPT OF BREASTFEEDING WITH ITS UNANI APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Breastfeeding has lots of health benefits for mother as well as infant. Breast milk contains important nutrients which an infant needs especially in the first six months of life. Breastfeeding has many health benefits for newborn as well as mother. Colostrum (known colloquially as beestings, or first milk) is a form of milk produced by the mammary glands of mammals (including humans) during pregnancy. In present era, breastfeeding is need of concern as neonatal development directly depends upon breast milk. Mother's milk is supreme for the child other than artificial milk. So in order to promote awareness, world Breastfeeding week is celebrated every year in August in more than 170 countries to encourage and improve its motive around the world. Prominent scholars of unani have supported breastfeeding by giving valuable instructions to keep the newborn healthy. Breastfeeding enhances the relationship between a mother and her infant by improving bonding. In the long term breastfeeding reduces the risk of many diseases.

INTRODUCTION

(1) Breast milk is ideal food for the newborn hence breastfeeding under any circumstances is prerequisite for this purpose (2) Breastfeeding begins within the first hour after delivery and continues as often as much as required by the newborn as it is only source of nutrition for the baby. (3) The importance of breastfeeding in low-income and middle income countries is well recognized, but less consensus exists about its importance in high income countries. (4) It has been estimated that 1.3 million deaths can be prevented each year if babies were exclusively breastfed for the first months followed by appropriate complementary feeding at least in the first year of life. (5) In order to promote awareness, world Breastfeeding week is celebrated every year in August in more than 170 countries to encourage and improve health of babies around the world. (6) A great asset in India is that an average Indian mother however having poor nutritional status has the capability to breastfeed for prolonged periods sometimes extending to nearly 2 years. Studies in this regard indicate that poor Indian women can secrete as much as 400 to 600 ml of milk per day. During 1st year the food is required to be given until 4 to 5 months after birth. Supplementation by additional food rich in proteins and other nutrients at 17 months can be added in small amount

(7). Development and milk production.

The growth of the breast is controlled by two female sex hormones estradiol (an oestrogen hormone) and progesterone which are first produced in large quantities at puberty. Although Milk is created continuously but it does not flow easily into lactiferous duct and be forced into them. This process called milk ejection or milk let down is stimulated by the Infant suckling at the breast. As a child suckles nerve impulses from the nipple travel to the spinal cord to the hypothalamus of the brain. The hypothalamus then secretes a hormone called oxytocin which causes the cells surrounding the globules to contract forcing the milk inside the lobules and throws it into the ducts, this involves several steps still it takes only about 30 seconds to complete the process. (8). Colostrum is the first milk which is most suitable form of food for the baby soon after the birth. (9) It is a deep yellow serous fluid alkaline in reaction. It has got a higher specific gravity a high protein, vitamin A, sodium and chloride content but has got lower carbohydrate, fat and potassium than the milk which is soon produced after colostrum. Colostrum contains antibody (IgA) which is very essential in many ways. (10) Mature human contains 3-5% fat, 0.8-1.2% proteins especially the principle protein Caseins, alpha – lactalbumin, lactoferrin, 6.8-7.2% carbohydrates (calculated as lactose), and 0.2% mineral constituents, the major minerals are Na, K, Ca, Mg, P, and Cl

RECOMENDATIONS FOR BREAST FEEDING

(11) Infant should be exclusively receiving only breast milk for the first six months of life to achieve optimal growth development and health. To enable mothers to establish and sustain exclusive breastfeeding UNICEF and WHO recommends the following

- Initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour of life
- Exclusive breastfeeding; that is the Infant should receive only breast milk without any additional food or drink not even water.
- Breastfeeding on demand; that is as often as child wants, day and night
- No use of bottles teats or pacifiers

Unani Approach & Breastfeeding.

(12) TIB Unani supports breastfeeding as it is a more holistic method of caring for an infant. According to TIB Unani philosophy, the temperament of an individual is determined mostly by generic factors as well as by intrauterine factors. Therefore phlegmatic mothers are more likely to have phlegmatic off springs.

Apart from the immunological data being transferred from mother to infant during breastfeeding, the accompanying sociological aspects forms the part of Holistic approach which is supported by Unani TIB.

(13) IBN SINA, one of the most famous and influential philosopher and scientist of Islam said the newborn should be nourished as far as possible from the Mother's breast as breast milk is only suitable formulation for growth and development of the baby. He also suggested that small quantity of milk should be squeezed out before each feed and especially before the morning feed thus helps the flow of milk and protect the baby from unnecessary strain and exertion. Massage of the breast enhances the production of milk. The nourishing mother should take moderate exercise and eat Wholesome food. A little care before the feed is generally beneficial for the baby like hygienic conditions etc.

(14) According to JALINOOS (Galen) child's best diet is mother's milk and nursing instructions for feeding of infants is essential to mother. He advised that Newborn should be fed frequently with mother's milk as it is nearest to the blood from which the baby has grown up as the foetus.

(15) Breast feeding in the beginning should be given only two to three times a day. If milk is scanty, appropriate vegetables like carrot seeds are extremely beneficial. Also roots and seed of fennel, seeds of black cumin added to the broth

(16) Earliest research observe that milk volume is typically greater in the morning hours and falls gradually as the day progresses, however milk production is continuous all the time. To speed

milk synthesis and increase daily milk production the key is to remove more milk from the breast and to do this quickly and frequently so that less milk accumulates in the breast between feeding. The following quotations from traditional (hadith) of the holy Prophet of Islam PBUH, virtualized some of the factors responsible for a baby's mental and physical nourishment ,in conformity with psychological and physiological aspects of Breastfeeding.

(1)Mother should feed their babies partly from right side breast and partly from left side breast, as the food and fluid values undergo change in both breast alternately”.

(2)While asleep keep your baby along left side”.

(17)The lap of a mother is very important for a baby in lieu of the effect of sound and rhythm of her heart beating, softness and warmth of breasts, where from the baby feels the said sensation on touch. In contrast to the above , an experiment had been conducted in Germany, envisaging that about 50% more positive impact had been observed among babies fed in the above specified way, towards their mental and physical development in contrast to those babies ,as were fed artificially...

(18)Mothers milk is supreme for the child other than artificial milk subsidiaries whenever a child needs milk, it should be given but only on a demand .If mother is not available, child should be breastfed by some other mother which is of the age 25 to 35 of good health and having the child of her own with complete 9 months delivery. A nourishing mother's diet should be full of nutritious substances including vegetables meat fruits especially dry fruits like Almonds or hazel nuts. The child should be fed up to 2 years after neath. Mausam Bahar (Spring season) is the best seasons to withdraw the child from breastfeeding .In the meantime lots of water, milk, rice , roti, Honey etc in small quantities is advisable.

(19)Researches proved that Breastfeeding not only protect the newborn from premature death and serious diseases but also protect mothers breast cancer, heart attacks, premenopausal diabetes and hypertension .

(20)SOME IMPORTANT CONSTITUENTS IN BREAST MILK

Carbohydrate

.Lactose is in high concentration (6-7%g/dl)in breast milk which helps in the absorption of calcium .Lactose also enhances the growth of lactobacilli in the intestine..

Proteins

The protein content of breast milk is low(0.9-1.1%g/dl) in the foprm of lactolbumin and lactoglobulin which is easily digested.

Fats

Breast milk has abundant fatty acids, which is essential for the myelination of nervous system

Vitamins and minerals

In first 4-6 months of life vitamins and minerals in breastfeed is sufficient for baby.

Immunological aspect

Protective factors like secretory IgA, lactoferrins, macrophages, lymphocytes, lactoferrin, lysozyme, etc are present in breast milk which protects the baby from infections..

Mental Growth

Studies have shown that babies who were breastfed had a higher IQ than those who are given other forms of milk.

(21)Hormones

Breast milk contains hormones, neuro-peptides and growth factors. One of the hormone Leptin suppresses appetite and infant serum Leptin is directly related to maternal concentration of Leptin. Ghrelin, which stimulates appetite, is found in higher concentration in foremilk than in hind milk, this concentration difference may also contribute to the better self-regulation of intake in breastfed infants compared to formula-fed infants.

Breastfeeding has short as well as long term benefits. According to "Reset Hypothesis" favourable metabolic changes in lactation persist after weaning, which results in long term decrease in chronic disease risk among women who have breastfed their babies.

CONCLUSION

Breastfeeding is the oldest and most beneficial method of feeding a newborn. Exclusive breastfeeding not only benefits the newborn but proves to be useful to mother too. Apart from its health benefits, breastfeeding strengthens the bond between baby and mother. Breastfeeding is an investment for future health of child. More the breast milk, lesser the risk of diseases. It has a lifelong impact on child's health, even it has been mentioned in holy Quran that the duration for breastfeeding should be two years from the birth of a baby.

Breastfeeding is well known for providing passive protection against infections hence it has a unique capacity to stimulate the immune system of the newborn along with several other long term positive effects.

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