

COVID-19 & BREASTFEEDING



bpni

putting child nutrition
at the forefront
of social change

Can women breastfeed during COVID-19 times?



According to WHO, COVID-19 does not transmit through breastmilk



Practicing skin to skin contact with her child after birth is recommended



WHO and UNICEF recommend breastfeeding within the first hour of the birth by Covid-19 suspected or positive mothers



Early initiation of breastfeeding after birth boosts the child's immunity with direct transfer of antibodies and essential nutrients



Keeping mothers and babies together helps in:



better temperature control in the baby

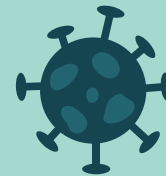


less stress for the mother



successful breastfeeding

What is COVID-19?



- COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new corona virus
- It has affected more than six million people so far in more than 200 countries

How does COVID-19 spread?



- It spreads from one infected person to a susceptible person through:
 - > Respiratory droplets from sneezing or talking
 - > Touching surfaces with virus and then touching one's mouth, nose and/or eyes



COVID-19 suspected or confirmed mothers should practice the following to prevent transmission of infection to the infant, specially while breastfeeding:



Wash hands before touching the baby



Wear a mask



Disinfect/clean frequently touched surfaces

What to do where breastfeeding is not possible?

In case the mother is sick and/or unable to breastfeed directly, a healthy care giver can feed expressed breastmilk to the baby with a clean cup and/or spoon



In the situation of the mother being unable to breastfeed or express breastmilk (on ventilator /ICU), one should explore following options with due safety and hygiene:



Donor human milk



Wet nursing



Relactation



Appropriate breastmilk substitute

What role should health facilities and healthcare workers play in COVID- 19 times?



• Hospital administration should ensure the following things in the health care facility and outreach programmes:

- > Avoid promotion and distribution of commercial baby foods and feeding bottles as it is harmful for the health of babies
- > On discharge mothers should be counselled on how to breastfeed exclusively



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The Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) is a 28 years old registered, independent, non-profit, national organisation that works towards protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding of infants and young children. BPNI works through policy analysis, advocacy, social mobilization, information sharing, education, research, training and monitoring the company compliance with the IMS Act. BPNI is the Regional Coordinating Office for International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), South Asia. BPNI also serves as the global secretariat for World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTI) programme, that analyses policy & programmes and galvanises action at country level.

BPNI does not accept funds or any support from the companies manufacturing baby foods, feeding bottles or infant feeding related equipment. BPNI does not associate with organizations having conflicts of interest.