

BREASTFEEDING BASICS

EDUCATOR'S TRAINING MANUAL

BASIC PRESENTATION

AUDIENCE

This lesson has essential information that is geared towards a woman who is breastfeeding for the first time; however it can be used as a review for women who have breastfed before.

The educator should maintain flexibility to adapt the lesson administration based on the participant's age, education level, and prior experience with and opinions on breastfeeding. For example, if a participant formula-fed her previous children, find out why. If it is appropriate, breastfeeding should be encouraged. If a participant does not want to breastfeed, find out why. It may be something that you can address with her. Please remember that educators should be non-judgmental. If the participant does not choose to breastfeed, her decision should still be supported. Present the pros and cons of breastfeeding and formula feeding in an un-biased and non-judgmental way.

What **not** to say: *"If you don't breastfeed your baby, he will not be as healthy"*

A better way to say it: *"Breastfeeding can protect babies from many diseases that are common in our community, like respiratory diseases and diarrhea."*

Breastfeeding is not simply an act between mother and baby. The participant's partner and family members should be involved in the discussion of what family traditions are and how they can help to support a breastfeeding mother.

OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of this lesson is to introduce the positive aspects of breastfeeding and introduce how to begin breastfeeding during pregnancy. The lesson "How to Feed" (Infant Care module) also has helpful tips and troubleshooting for the breastfeeding woman.

MATERIALS NEEDED

"Breastfeeding Basics" lesson box (includes lesson flipchart, reference manual and activity sheets)

TIME REQUIRED

In general this lesson should take approximately 50 minutes to teach. It may take more or less time, depending on the background knowledge of the participant and whether she asks a lot of questions.

AGENDA

- Warm-up (5 minutes)
- Review previous lessons and follow-up with referrals (5 minutes)
- Introduction to the lesson (5 minutes)
- Teaching the Lesson (20 minutes)

- Activity: Breastfeeding Positions (10 minutes)
- Wrap-up (5 minutes)

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES

WARM-UP

The goal of any warm-up is to make the participant feel comfortable, secure and open to asking questions. Ask the participant if she has thought about whether or not she will breastfeed. Ask her if she knows whether other family members or friends breastfed and what their experiences were. You do not want to make a participant feel guilty if she is planning to formula-feed, so you must present the material in a non-judgmental manner.

REVIEW PREVIOUS LESSON AND FOLLOW-UP WITH REFERRALS

This will probably not be the first lesson with a participant, so take time to review the previous lesson(s). Ask if she has had any questions since receiving the last lesson, and probe to find out if she remembers the key teaching points. If referrals were made to medical or social services, follow-up to see if they were sought, and what the outcomes were, if appropriate. Include this information on the session summary form.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LESSON

Explain the purpose of this lesson to the participant: “This lesson is meant to teach you about the benefits of breastfeeding, how it works, and how to do it.”

TEACHING THE LESSON

- Using the flipchart, go over the lesson’s objectives and teaching points.
- The first lesson focuses on a wide range of topics, including the benefits of breastfeeding, how milk is produced, and how much is enough.
- The first lesson slide ponders: “**Why Breastfeeding is Best for Babies.**” Present the important reasons why someone should breastfeed. Try to include as many local ideas as possible, as well as family tradition. If the participant has breastfed before, but stopped exclusive breastfeeding early, find out why. Some common reasons why women stop, and what can be done, are addressed in the Reference Manual of the “IC: How to Feed” lesson [*See Reference Manual 4: Addressing Barriers to Breastfeeding*].
- Stress to participant that she doesn’t need to do anything to **prepare to breastfeed**, other than maintain a healthy diet.
- When teaching “**How Your Body Makes Milk,**” stress that breast milk is produced when it is used – the more a woman breastfeeds, the more milk she will produce.
- Transition directly into the **evolution of milk** page. Explain what colostrum is and its importance in transferring antibodies from mother to baby. Explain that antibodies help protect people against illness, and adults build up many over their lifetime that can be transferred to a baby through breast milk.
- When teaching the participant “**How much is enough,**” stress that not all babies are hungry immediately after birth. Parents should be concerned once their baby goes 2 days without eating.
- Review the growth chart in the reference manual (Appendix 1) with the participant. To use the growth chart, follow these instructions. 1) Use the correct chart for the baby’s sex

(boy or girl); 2) Find the baby's age along the bottom of the chart and draw a vertical line all the way up the chart at that age; 3) Find the baby's weight (in pounds or kilograms) on the bottom left side of chart (or right as the baby gets bigger) and draw a horizontal line across the chart at that weight. Mark where the weight line intersects with the age line. Look to see which pre-drawn lines your mark lies near or between. The pre-drawn lines have numbers connected to them at the far right, and these numbers tell you what weight "percentile" the baby belongs to at that point; 4) Repeat step 3 – this time for the baby's height (found at the top left or right side of the column); 5) Keep in mind that it is normal for newborns to lose weight in the first week. Give the participant copies of the growth chart and encourage her to fill them out as her baby grows.

- In "**Tips for the First Feeding**," be sure to pause to ask if the participant has any questions about how to breastfeed, especially the first time. Encourage her to communicate her wishes with her doctor and nurses in the hospital, to ensure that mom and baby are available to each other for feedings.

ACTIVITY: BREASTFEEDING POSITIONS

Give the participant the opportunity to try the breastfeeding **positions**. A doll will be provided in the box for her to practice each position. Encourage her to change positions at each breastfeeding, and remind her to alternate breasts. The lying-down position is best if she had a cesarean section or an episiotomy.

WRAP-UP

Review the objectives and main points of the lesson. Finish the session by asking the participant if she has any questions or comments. Supply the participant with referrals if necessary. Schedule the next appointment.

If the participant was not sure whether she would breastfeed at the beginning of the lesson, ask her at the end about her current thoughts. Support any decision that she makes, and provide her with referrals to facilitate any feeding option.