

Promoting Exclusive Breastfeeding up to 6 months

A psycho-educational approach



Training Manual for Health Workers

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Introduction

The practice of feeding only breast milk, including expressed breast milk (water, breast milk substitutes, other liquids and solid foods excluded) is vitally important in reducing infant morbidity and mortality. WHO recommends this exclusive breastfeeding should be continued for the first six months of the infant's life. Pakistan does not have a satisfactory rate of exclusive breastfeeding among infants of 6 months age group. More efforts are required to improve this key area of child health. Research has shown that despite the early initiation, many of the mothers develop some false perceptions regarding the quantity of breast milk, its adequacy for the growing child and hence lose the sense of efficacy in themselves and the milk they produce. These perceptions can be dealt with and improved with the help of well-designed health education.

The Lady Health Worker (LHW) of the National Programme for Family Planning & Primary Health Care is the most widely available health educator in the country. She delivers messages on a range of health issues to the rural population in Pakistan. Important among these is promoting exclusive breastfeeding for infants up to 6 months of age. The worker sensitizes the expecting mother during pregnancy, helps her initiate breastfeeding after delivery, instructs the mother on feeding techniques and tries to address various problems faced in this process. Research has shown that the LHW faces difficulty in addressing some strong barriers perceived by the mother. The present communication technique has been developed to empower the LHW to deal appropriately with the misperceptions of mothers and help them continue the behaviour of exclusive breastfeeding.

The technique, derived from psychological principles of communication has a strong component of empathic listening. After listening to the problems being perceived, unhealthy thoughts underlying these problems are identified and alternate thoughts with actions proposed. The technique has three steps. In step 1, the worker listens to mother and tries to identify her unhealthy thoughts regarding breastfeeding. In step 2, she helps the mother identify some healthy alternatives while in step 3 she proposes healthy actions in line with the alternative thoughts. Appropriate pictures are used throughout this process to facilitate the two-way communication.

This manual will enable the worker learn the new communication approach. It has been designed to help the worker promote exclusive breastfeeding in a better way. Certain barriers reported in research articles have been mentioned and approach to address these barriers proposed. Questions given in the first chapter provide intellectual stimulation to

the worker while she is reading it. Themes that have easy recall value, and action messages will help the mother remember and carry out desired actions and adopt the behaviour change continuum. The workers are expected to read the first chapter **Promoting exclusive breastfeeding: Introduction to the Programme** before coming to the course. The facilitator will discuss questions given in this chapter and responses of the workers.

The subsequent six chapters describe how starting from the last trimester, the six sessions will be conducted. Pictures have been used to illustrate common perceptions reported by mothers regarding problems in breastfeeding. Your client mothers may describe perceptions or difficulties other than what have been used in the scenarios and relevant illustrations for that particular session. In that case, you can use some appropriate set of pictures from the “common difficult scenarios” described in the last chapter.

You will be provided with a monthly supervision meeting in which problems faced on the field will be discussed and bottle-necks if any, addressed.

Promoting exclusive breastfeeding: Introduction to the Programme

Breastfeeding and its significance

Breast milk is the most comprehensive of all the natural foods. Not only it ensures physical growth and prevents disease, it also provides the micro-nutrients essential for the development of brain and lays the structural basis for the infant's intelligence. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends initiation of breastfeeding within first hour of birth and continuing exclusive breast milk as the single and most appropriate nutrition for the first six months of the infant's life. Adding other types of milk or semi-solids not only deprives the infant of the advantages of breast milk, it also introduces him/her to disease-causing agents. According to estimates, 10-50 percent of infant deaths in the developing countries can be averted with the help of simple, home-based and cost-effective measures, such as exclusive breastfeeding.

Write down the advantages of BF to mother and the baby that are most appealing according to your experience:

Breastfeeding in Pakistan

The situation of breastfeeding in Pakistan can not be termed satisfactory. According to reports, only 55% of the infants are exclusively breastfed in the first month of their lives and this percentage quickly comes down with only 8-10% of infants being exclusively breastfed at 6 months of their lives. Recent reports (PDHS, 2006-07) have presented a slightly better situation though the whole picture still remains bleak. Only 29 percent of newborns are given breast milk within one hour of their birth, while the remaining two-thirds are given other things, including milk, ghuttee, honey, tea, herbs, etc according to this report. The number of breastfed babies, however, rises to 70 percent within one day and 85 percent at one month of age, but all of them are not exclusively breastfed in accordance with WHO recommendations.

Other feeds are also added; as a result, only 55 percent of infants at two months of age get exclusive breast milk. The number plummets to 37 percent at six months. This figure even if true is far from the recommended 100 percent. According to experts, this low prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding is a significant contributor to the infant deaths in the country. The high number (78/1000 live births) of children dying before completing the first year of their life is unacceptable, and can be reduced by simple and cost-effective

interventions, such as early initiation of breastfeeding followed by its continuation up to six months of the infant's life.

According to your observations, how good is the BF situation in your area?

Breastfeeding and problems faced by mothers

There are many factors that cause discontinuation of exclusive breastfeeding among the Pakistani mothers. Most striking among these is a mother's false perception that she is not producing enough quantity of milk. She develops this perception because her baby cries in demand of the breastfeed, avidly takes it and falls asleep after the feed or plays for a while only to raise the demand once again after some time. Ignorant of the fact that mother's milk gets digested and assimilated quickly to ensure the availability of all the nutritive requirements to the growing body, the mother thinks perhaps she is producing an inadequate quantity of milk. This false perception; also called perceived insufficiency of milk (PIM) is reinforced by other family members, who also had the similar belief while they were feeding their babies. Unfortunately, this reinforcement is also provided by the doctors, nurses and LHVs. In their busy schedule, in which not much time is left for counseling, or sometimes because of other motives, they also validate this perception and readily prescribe some substitute.

Please write the common BF problems reported by mothers in your area?

Another important reason is the mother's exhausted physical and emotional state immediately after birth, because of which other people become the first care-givers for the newborn baby. These family members holding the driving seat are not routinely involved in the counseling sessions on exclusive breastfeeding during pregnancy. As a result, they make decisions about the baby's feeding according to their best knowledge and capability. Delaying the first breastfeed to give ghuttee, some other milk, tea or honey, which occurs in two-thirds of the cases, is an important consequence. Continuing the other milk that was given as the first feed or adding it along with breast milk has been observed in many of these infants.

Other factors include the fear that breastfeeding will distort the mother's physical appearance and make her body un-shapely, the subliminal yet continued promotion of breast milk substitutes by the infant formula companies, the shyness felt by the mother in breastfeeding her baby in the presence of other people, and the perceived comfort of mother by introducing substitutes along with breast milk.

Lady Health Worker and promotion of Breastfeeding

The Lady Health Worker (LHW) of the National Programme for Family Planning & Primary Health Care is playing an important role in promoting breastfeeding and providing lactation counselling to the mothers. The worker starts sensitizing the mother during pregnancy to initiate breastfeeding in the earliest hours after delivery. She makes herself available in the period immediately after delivery to help the mother start breastfeeding in this period. She instructs the correct technique of breastfeeding and supervises that it is being followed by the mother. She also provides counselling on common problems like retracted or sore nipple, baby's weak suckling, and abdominal discomfort after feeding etc.

There is a need to continue these valuable efforts of the LHW and supplement these with health education that can deal with false perceptions. These include the perception of deficient quantity of breast milk, that the baby needs food in addition to breast milk, that baby is 'growing' and needs early weaning, chances of losing body shape, and false perceptions about the uselessness or rather harmfulness of colostrums. These perceptions are related to cognitions or thoughts. Research has proved that proper health education can help change these false perceptions. The present health education course on promoting breastfeeding is designed to help LHW find out these false perceptions, replace them with appropriate thoughts and pave the way to have desired breastfeeding behaviour outcomes.

What step/s can help LHW the most in promoting exclusive BF for 6 months?

Role of thoughts in BF problems

Thoughts have a significant role in the breastfeeding behaviour of mothers. First of all, the primigravida thinks how she will be able to feed the baby as she has never done it before (*Kya meray andar sey doodh khud bakhud paida ho jaey ga?*). After delivery, other people take control of baby and give him/her ghuttee rather than mother's feed thinking it won't harm the baby or the mother (*Aik dafa sey kia hota hey?*). In the initial days, the baby struggles because of weak suckling and his crying makes the mother

believe she is deficient of milk (*Mera doodh utar nahin raha*). Later on, when the baby learns how to take feed and takes it avidly, digests it quickly and demands the feed again making the mother perceive as if the quantity was less (*bachay ka pait nahin bhar raha*). At or around 40 days (*Chilla*), the mother has to revert to other responsibilities and she starts introducing other foods thinking that now the baby could digest other heavier things as well (*Bacha ab barra ho gaya aur is ka meda doosra doodh bhi hazam kar leta hey*). Similar thoughts lead to addition of other types of milk and weaning foods before the recommended age of 6 months.

Please write the common misconceptions regarding BF expressed by mothers in your area?

How thoughts lead to actions

Whatever we do is processed first in our brain. This process can be called thinking. The final thoughts resulting at the end of this process lead to actions. Unhealthy thoughts lead to unhealthy actions while healthy or correct thoughts lead to healthy actions. If a mother thinks adding more ghee makes the food tasty without causing any harm, she will continue using more ghee increasing the chances of blood pressure and heart attack among the family members. On the other hand, a wise housewife will use other methods to improve the taste helping family members stay out of the risks of high blood pressure and heart attack and will also save money.

Please fill the following table with two unhealthy and two healthy thoughts along with the actions and consequences

Thoughts	Actions	Consequence

Thoughts can be improved

Research has proved that thoughts can be improved. This is achieved by replacing the unhealthy thoughts with their healthier alternatives. This process is accomplished in 3 steps.

Step 1: It is important to be aware of the unhealthy thoughts that develop as a result of problems, experiences, peer influence and the other personality modulating factors in the environment.

Step 2: The accuracy of unhealthy thoughts and resultant actions leading to bad consequences is challenged. In this way, the person realizes the need to change these thoughts and thinks of the alternatives that are healthier.



Step 3: The worker suggests activities and homework to help mothers practice thinking and acting healthy.

Examples of the common unhealthy thinking styles, their possible alternatives and suggested actions regarding health have been provided in the following table. You are requested to fill the last two rows with a relevant BF scenario.

Step 1: Recognizing the unhealthy thoughts	Step 2: Replacing with healthy alternatives	Step 3: Actions
It is wrong to think that I don't need to exercise	Daily walk or exercise will keep me fit and healthy	Going for a walk or exercise on daily basis
It is unhealthy to think that my child will not catch infections	Every child can catch infections and should be prevented by vaccination	Getting the child immunized in time against EPI diseases

Visit 1: Last trimester

Priming the mother and family on Exclusive Breastfeeding

Objectives:

At the end of this visit the mother and the rest of the family members should remember the following:

1. Health and the life of the baby are important to all.
2. Mother's milk ensures baby's good health. Moreover it is a means of protection against illness.
3. It is essential to breastfeed the newborn immediately after his birth. This will ensure his health and provide protection from diseases.
4. The person, who will assist the mother in the process of breastfeeding in the immediate postnatal period, should be selected well before the childbirth.

This is the first and most important session as you will try to engage the whole family on to a common agenda i.e. child health. With the help of pictures, you will make the family understand that our actions are a result of our thoughts that can be controlled with a conscious effort. It is expected that after your discussion, the mother and other family members will become convinced on giving only mother's milk and nothing else to the newborn.

Engaging the mother and family in the conversation:

It is very important to win the trust of the mother and the family in this first sitting regarding exclusive breastfeeding for the initial six months. The counselling cards provided to you will help in this discussion.

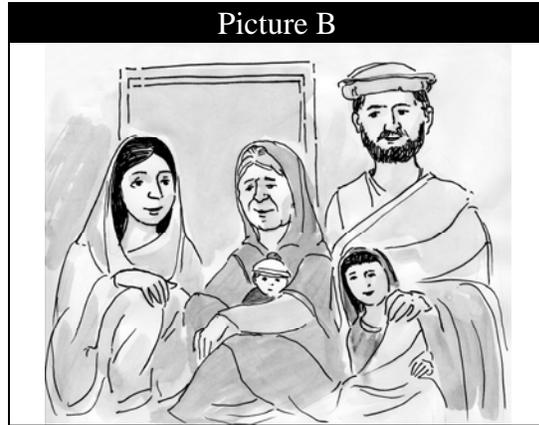
How to start the conversation:

Start the conversation when the pregnant woman and other family members have got together. Begin with initial ice breaking and bring the discussion to the health and well being of the baby and the mother. Describe how various problems during pregnancy, child birth and child rearing look enormous, but some families deal with them better. Show them picture A on card 1 and ask what do they think about the family in this picture? Then show picture B on the same card and ask for their opinion about that family. After establishing the unhappy (A) and happy (B) family, ask all the family members which family they would like to be a part of?

Picture A



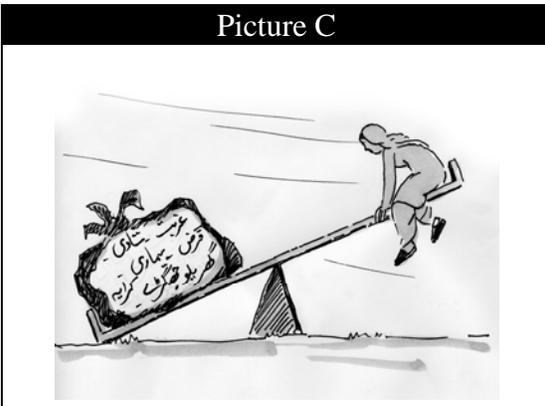
Picture B



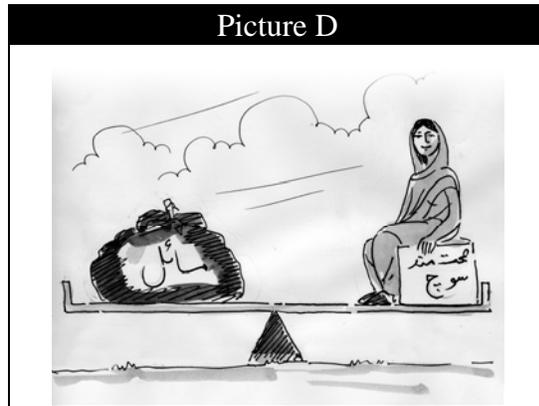
Our Problems:

Now show them Picture C on card 1 and explain that problems are a part of everyone's life and how burden of these problems keeps pushing us. Describe that problems can be solved if we use our common sense rather than submitting to the problems. Now show picture D and explain that initial nutrition is as important for the child as the child for the future of the family. Clarify that mothers face many difficulties while breastfeeding but problems can be solved by adopting the right thinking.

Picture C

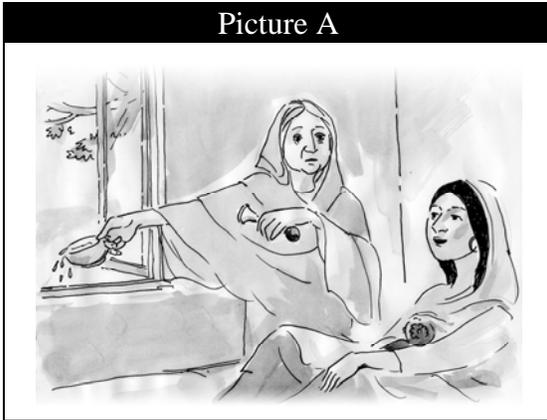


Picture D

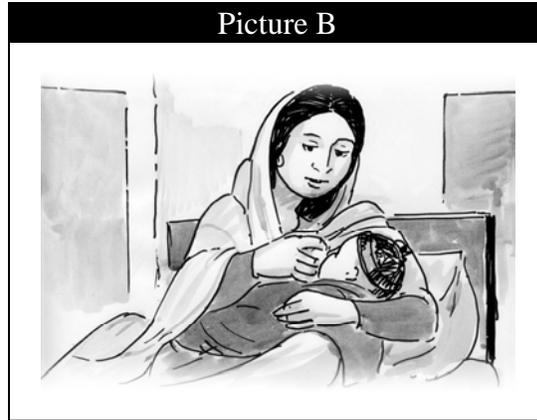


Perceptions about Colostrum:

Initial milk (colostrum) is very important for child. It includes nutrition as well as antibodies which protect the baby from infection. Certain misconceptions about the colostrum are found in many families. Show picture A on card 2 to the family members and ask their opinion about colostrum to the baby. Listen carefully. Now draw their attention towards picture B and try to correct their misconceptions. Emphasize if they are thinking on the right path.



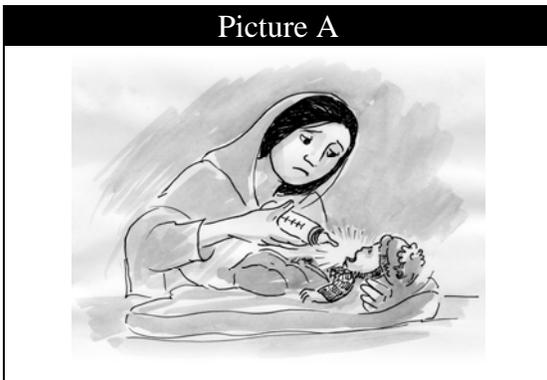
Many people believe colostrum is harmful



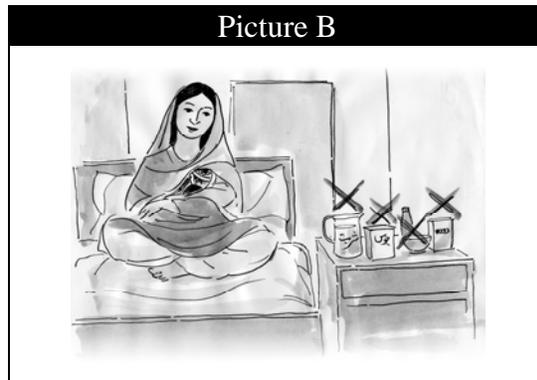
Giving colostrum prevents disease and death the first few days of infant's life

Exclusive Breastfeeding:

Many families start breastfeeding the baby but simultaneously add cow's milk or formula milk or other things like water, tea, herbal extracts etc are also given to the baby under the assumption that these are not harmful for the baby. Show picture C on card 2 to family members and ask them what they think about feeding other things except mother's milk. Describe with the help of Picture D that no other nutrition is suitable for the baby during the first six months except breast milk.



Other food, even water deprive the baby of the advantages of breast milk

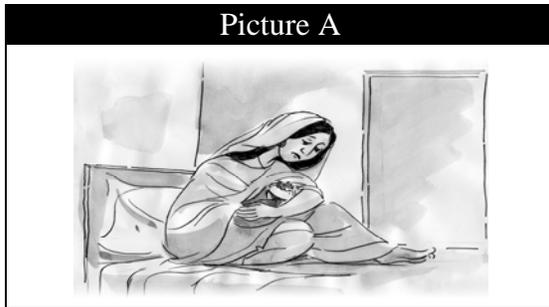


No other thing is appropriate during first 6 months, except mother's milk

Milk Let Down:

Doctors and other Health Workers are aware of the process of milk let down but mother is usually unaware of this process. As a result when baby doesn't get enough milk in the beginning and keeps on crying, mother thinks that the quantity of her milk is inadequate. Therefore she starts feeding the other milk with bottle, and in this way top feed and bottle replace breastfeeding. With the help of card 3 picture A, explain this situation to the mother and tell her that every mother faces the same problem and its solution is not feeding with bottle but to breastfeed again and again. Explain that the process of milk let down matures in the initial days and provides enough milk for the baby only if the baby

tries again and again (picture B). Milk dries in milk producing ducts if this process is not established. As a result, the bottle fed baby frequently becomes a victim of diarrhoea and pneumonia and not only that; chances of breast cancer in the mother also increase many fold.



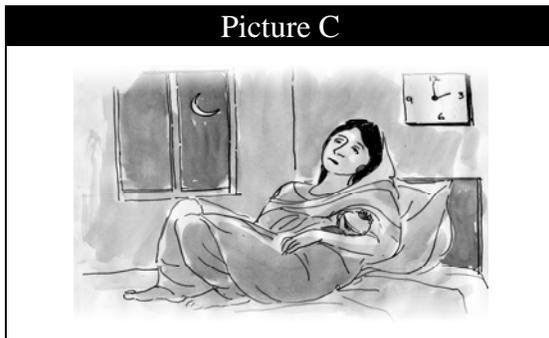
There is less milk output in the initial days because a milk let down system is immature



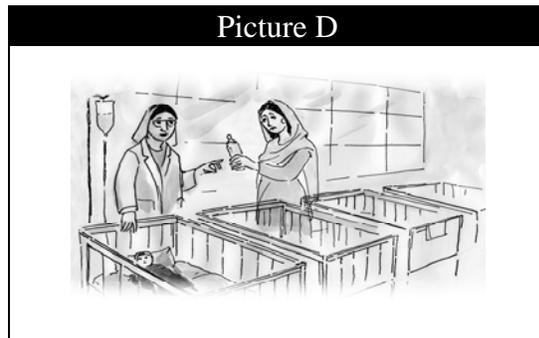
Frequent breastfeeding leads to maturity of this system and adequacy of milk output

Breast Milk:

Explain that baby's health and life is dear to every one and every one knows that mothers' milk is the best diet. Yet many people start feeding other milk. Ask the mother and family what are their thoughts about mother's milk. Encourage them to describe these problems and listen carefully. Now show picture A on card 3 and ask for mother's and family's opinion about it. Show picture C and D on the same card and ask which situation is better: the minor discomfort of getting up in the night to feed the baby or frequent illness of the baby?



Bottle feeding seems easy but repeated illnesses of the baby make life difficult

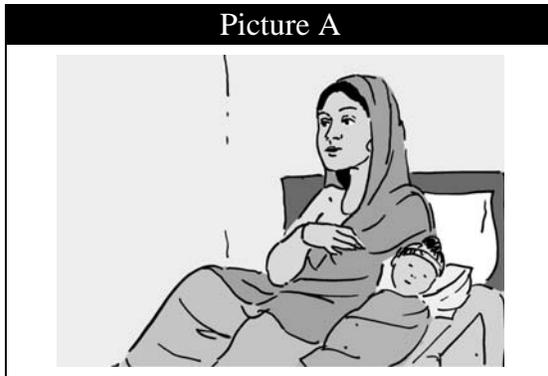


A little discomfort is better than the pains of repeated admissions in the hospital

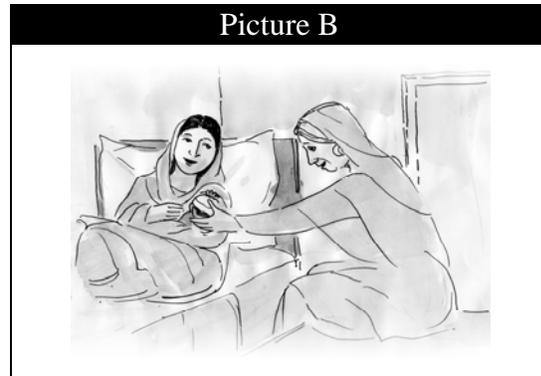
Breastfeeding in the initial hours:

Explain to the mother and the rest of the family that breastfeeding is very important for the new born baby within an hour, and mostly mothers can do it well. Now show them picture A, and B on card 4 and emphasize that the initial hours are very important for a baby. Explain that most mothers can breastfeed right after birth, and they require only a little help from a family member.

During the conversation listen to the mother and the family carefully. Note down the points and explain that these problems are important and we will discuss them in the next visit.



First few hours are crucial in feeding the baby



Most of the mothers can breastfeed immediately after delivery

Concluding the first visit:

At the end of the first meeting, ask the mother and the family members what useful information they have got from your conversation. Help them in recalling and repeating the important points. The following points given on card 4 will help you in this regard,

1. Health and life of the to-be-born baby is important to all.
2. Breast milk is the main source of child's health and also prevents from illness.
3. The assumption e.g. colostrum is poisonous, the quantity of milk is less or that other feeds will not harm the baby are wrong.
4. In order to ensure the health of the baby, he/she will be given mother's feed immediately after birth, and this will be continued exclusively for the first six months.
5. Help family members in selecting a family member who will support the mother immediately after giving birth.
6. Begin the immunization of the child immediately after birth.

Home work for mother:

1. Remind yourself every day that you will breastfeed your baby.
2. Do not buy any feeding bottle during the preparations for the baby.

Role Play:

Discuss breastfeeding with the help of counselling card 2 and explain that most of the mothers can breastfeed their babies immediately after birth with the help and support of the family members.

Visit 2: Immediately After Delivery

Early Breastfeeding to safeguard the baby from infection

Objectives:

At the end of this visit the mother and the rest of the family should remember the following points:

1. There are more chances of infections in a newborn than the older people.
2. Breast milk will protect the baby from germs and infections.
3. Top feeding with or without breastfeed will weaken the baby and chances of infection will be increased.
4. Breastfeed the baby after every two hours. Breastfeed more frequently if the demand is more.
5. Mother should remember the cleanliness of hands and breasts.

It is part of the responsibilities of the lady health worker that she should be present at the time of delivery in her area, if this was not possible, she should try to reach there as soon as possible for complications in the mother after delivery. She should also examine the baby for any problems and to ensure proper initiation of breastfeeding. This chapter describes these steps in an appropriate way.

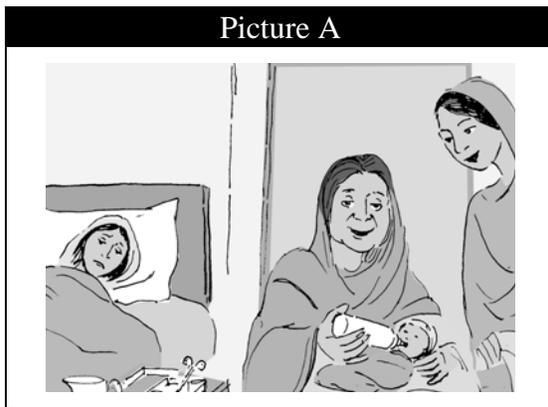
How to start the conversation:

Greet on entering in to the house and congratulate according to the situation.

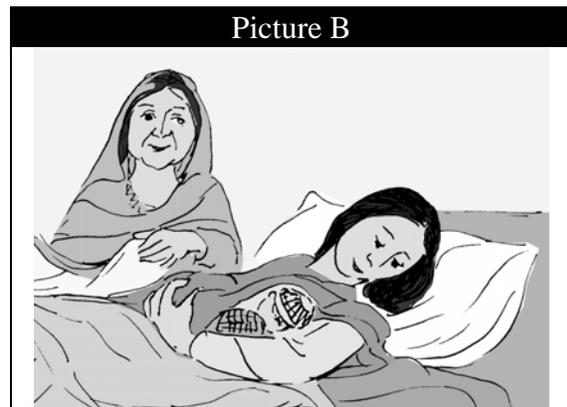
1. Firstly observe if there are any signs of complications in the mother. Look for sign of excessive bleeding, retained placenta, very high fever or foul smelling discharge. If any signs found, make arrangements to refer to the nearest facility or contact a gynaecologist.
2. Examine the newborn for danger signs. Being unable to feed, blueness, fits, problem in breathing and weight below 2.5 kg are alarming signs. Refer the baby to the nearest facility if any of these signs are present.
3. After making sure about both mother and baby are okay, help the mother in breastfeeding the baby. After this, begin your conversation with the family members.

Help mother in feeding the baby:

After making sure that there are no signs of complications in mother and baby, help the mother breastfeed the baby. Spend some time with her and start the discussion with the family members once the process of first breastfeed has been established start. Tell them that baby needs family's support. Show picture A on counselling card 5 and ask their opinion about giving top feed to the baby. If they still think that there is no problem in feeding other milk to baby, tell them that it is similar to erode the foundation of baby's health and Life. Repeat this point with the help of picture B that breastfeed is best for the baby. Reinforce that neonate in his initial days is weak and protective substance present in breast milk will work as a protective shield against germs and diseases. Properly breastfed children usually stay safe from illness and do not need antibiotics.



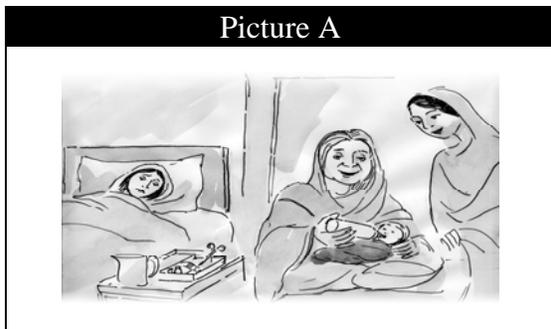
Feeding with bottle is like destroying the foundations of health



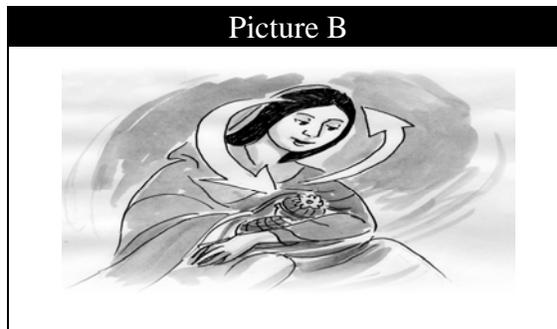
BF is the biggest gift for the baby

Clarifying initial doubts on Breastfeeding:

Pay attention to the mother who has just finished feeding the baby. Ask about feeding problems and listen carefully. The commonly heard complaints at this time are less milk output, nipple problems, and baby's weak suckling etc



Immediately giving bottle to soothe the baby is harmful



Milk flow is a natural process. More sucking leads to more flow

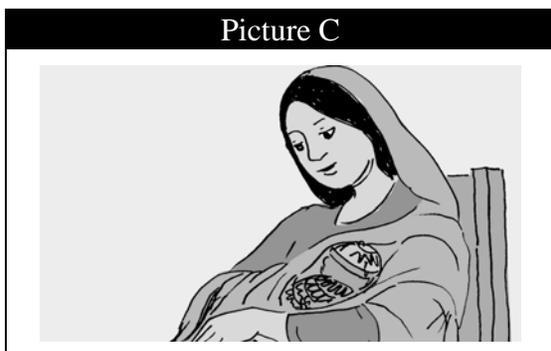
Listen carefully to mother's problems. After birth the most important factor is your caring behaviour towards the mother and your surety that breastfeeding the baby is the solution of all problems. Show picture A on card 6 and Explain how early days are difficult as the inexperienced baby struggles to feed. With the help of Picture B explain milk let down and inform that the situation will get better in a few days.

Describe the correct way of breastfeeding. Tell the mother in a polite way that the three main points while feeding the baby are:

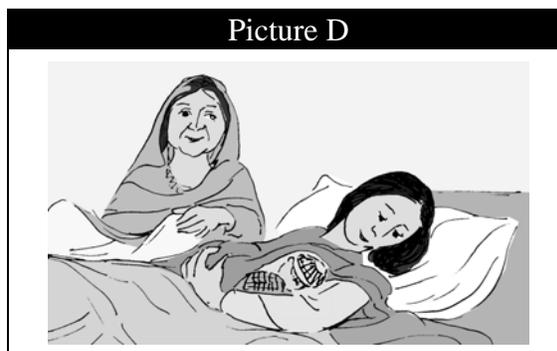
1. Correct position of the baby
2. Baby's face attached to breasts properly
3. Effective suckling by the baby

Prevention from infection in the first month:

Explain with the help of counselling card 6 picture C that in initial days, the new born is highly vulnerable to diseases.



Antibodies present in mother's milk prevent the child from infections



Mother's milk is the biggest gift for the baby

Antibodies present in mother's milk protect the baby from these infections. Show picture D and ask about the role of the family members in infant's health. Explain to them that mother can't breastfeed the baby properly without their help.

Ways to increase mother's milk:

Some mothers develop the perception that they do not have enough milk. Explain that adequate increase in diet is the best way to increase the milk. Such mothers should add one *chapatti* and also a glass of milk in their diet for the child. *Zeera Pani* (cumin seed) is also a natural way to increase the milk.

Concluding the visit:

Congratulate once again at the end of the meeting on the safe delivery and the safety of mother and the newborn. Ask mother and the family members about the important points they have learned relating to baby's health and diet. Help them in recalling with the help of the following points given in counselling card 6.

1. There are more chances of infections in a newborn than the older people.
2. Breast milk will protect the baby from germs and infections.
3. Top feeding with or without breastfeed will weaken the baby and chances of infection will be increased.
4. Appreciate the good work of mother's supporter and ask her to carry on.

Homework for the mother:

1. Exclusive breastfeed the baby and do not add anything else.
2. Increase your own diet.

Role Play:

Make the mother understand with the help of Counselling card 6 that using bottle is not appropriate. Breastfeeding baby again and again increases milk output, and the act of breastfeeding becomes easy.

Visit no: 3 and 4: At 1st and 2nd month after birth

Exclusive Breastfeeding to ensure adequate weight gain

Objectives:

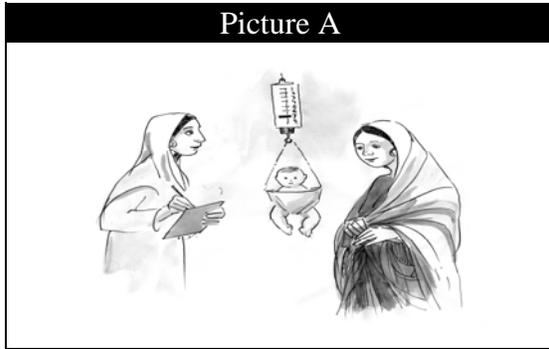
At the end of this visit mother and family members should remember the following:

1. Baby will be given exclusive breast milk. All the other things including water will be avoided.
2. Family members should help mother in the household work so that she can properly take care of the baby and its diet.
3. Mother should know that repeated breastfeeding will enhance her milk output. Also that if baby passes the urine more than six or seven times a day; it proves that the baby is getting adequate amount of milk.

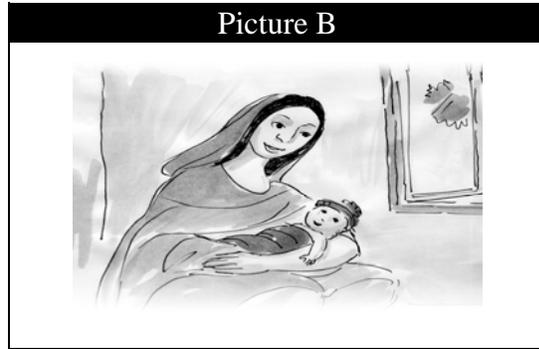
According to the schedule of L.H.W, the visit will be conducted one month after delivery. This is the time when almost all the support available to the mother suddenly vanishes after completion of 40 days (*chilla*). The mother has to take care of the whole house in addition to feeding and taking care of the baby. The growing baby also demands the feed after short intervals which makes mother think that perhaps her milk is insufficient for the baby. She therefore feels the need to add top feed in addition to her own milk. Through this session, the worker will remind the mother that her baby is still her most important responsibility. The worker will also inform the mother and other family members that exclusive breastfeeding for first 40 days was essential to guard the newborn against infections, and continuing the practice is now required to ensure the maximum weight gain of the baby.

How to start the conversation:

Greet the mother and the family. Gradually come to the health of mother and child. Congratulate the family on taking care of both the mother and child baby. Ask how has been the experience of caring and nurturing. Specifically ask the mother about her perceptions and breast feeding during the last 40 days (*chilla*). Listen attentively and take notes if required. Weigh the baby and inspect for BCG injection. Explain with the help of counselling card 7 picture A that during first month the baby develops familiarity with the environment, and almost no increase occurs in weight. Explain with the help of picture B that second month is the time when a baby gains weight only if the exclusive breastfeeding is continued.



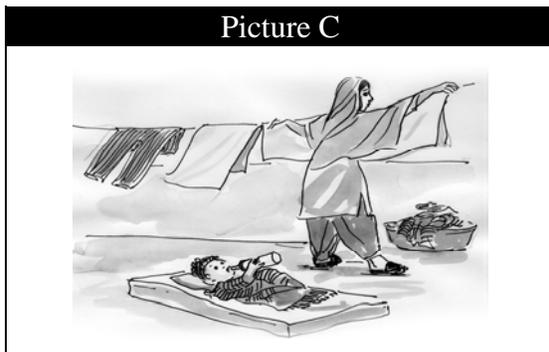
There is no increase in baby's weight during first month



Second month is the time when a baby gain weight only if exclusive BF is continued

Child has the priority:

Explain that second month is the time when baby direly requires Breastfeeding for weight gain. Discuss that *chilla* is the period when support to mother drastically decreases and she has a number of things to do and being a lady health worker, you are aware of this reality. Also make her understand with the help of counselling card 7 picture C that usually this is the time when mother become under pressure and add bottle feeding. Make her understand with picture D that other things are also important but the most important thing is to breastfeed the baby. Explain that bottle feed will make baby ill and will increase mother's work. Also explain that the highest gain in weight will occur with exclusive BF, and that repeated demand from infant is because of easy digestibility of mother's milk and the gain in weight is a proof.



I have to do other things as well



I have to do other things but the most important is feeding my baby

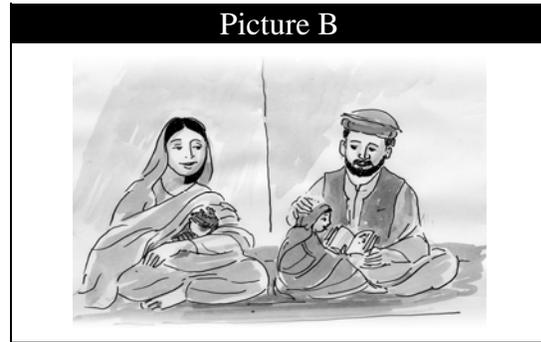
Role of family members in baby's health and life:

In addition to the mother, the other family members also want the child to be healthy and have a responsibility. It is therefore important to include them in the conversation and make them realise this responsibility. Talk to other family members present at home like husband, mother-in-law, sister-in-law etc, during this visit. With the help of counselling card 8 picture A make them understand that if the mother alone would carry out the

household activities; it will effect baby's diet and health. Explain that every member should help the mother to safeguard the future of the family. Also explain with the help of picture B that if a family leave every thing on mother, the family will live an easy but relaxed life but the baby would continuously suffer. Talk to the mother if no other family member is available at time and ask her to tell this to rest of the family members whenever she gets a chance.



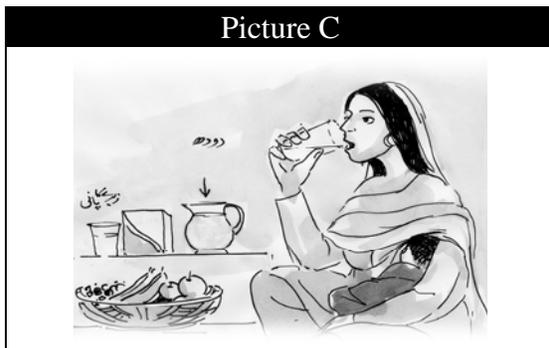
If everything is left to mother, child suffers



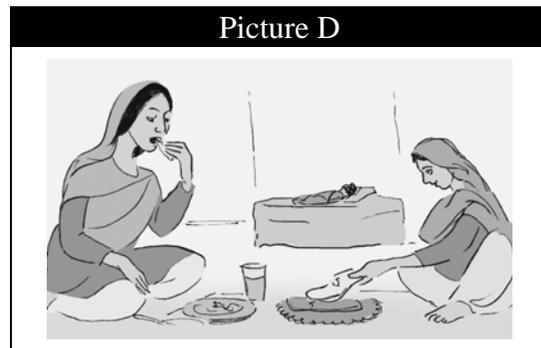
Feeding the baby is entirely mother's job but other people can help in other jobs

Mother's proper nutrition is important:

When a child starts to grow, his need for milk also grows. He cries and takes feed repeatedly which makes mother think that her milk output is less. It is therefore very important to discuss the matter at this point in time. Tell the mother that milk output increases instead of decreasing by feeding again and again. If she wishes that her baby is properly fed, she should take proper diet. Explain with the help of counselling card number 8 picture C that a mother should add one *chapatti* in every meal for the sake of her baby and should not decrease the BF. Also inform her that if she adds top feed, her milk output would definitely decrease. With the help of picture D ask her if she knows some ways to enhance milk output. Suggest some appropriate methods such as increasing food intake, drinking milk, taking cumin seed water etc.



Mother drinking water or milk while feeding the baby



Mother eating one additional chapatti for the baby

Concluding the visit:

Congratulate the family members especially mother on taking good care of the baby. Tell them that in the coming days, baby would gain weight by regular Breastfeeding and in the next visit they would be able to see it themselves with the help of weighing scale. Help them remember the following points with the help of counselling card 8:

1. Baby will be given exclusive breast milk. All the other things including water will be avoided.
2. Family members should help mother in the household work so that she can properly take care of the baby and its diet.
3. Mother should know that repeated breastfeeding will enhance her milk out put. Also that if baby passes the urine more than six or seven times a day; it proves that the baby is getting adequate amount of milk.
4. Advise mother to continue Breastfeeding.
5. Inform the mother about the date and time of the next visit

Role Play:

With the help of counselling card 7, explain to the mother that baby's weight remains same during first month, and that baby gains weight quickly during 2nd month if mother continues the exclusive breastfeeding.

Visit 5: 3 months after birth

Exclusive Breastfeeding to ensure adequate weight gain, physical Growth & mental development

Objectives:

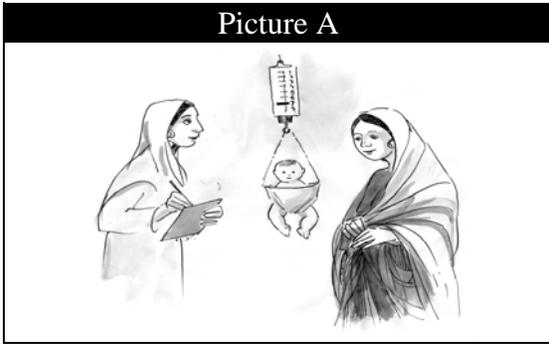
At the end of this visit the mother and other family members should understand the following:

1. Exclusive breastfeed is the only diet for the baby. No other diet apart from this should be given to the baby for first six months.
2. Whole family is responsible for baby's nutrition and growth. Family members can fulfil this duty by helping mother in the domestic work.
3. If a baby passes urine five or six times a day; it is an evidence that the baby is getting milk in an adequate amount.
4. The coming months are the months of adequate weight gain, physical growth and mental development. All this requires mother's feed.

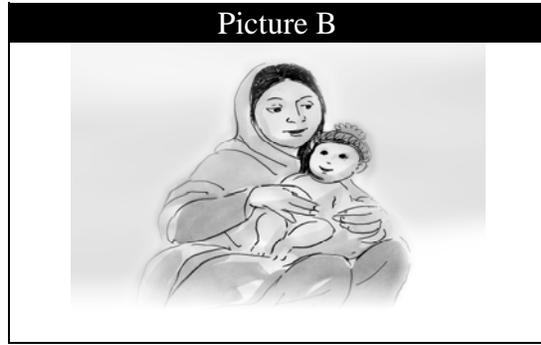
According to Lady Health Workers' monthly time table, this visit will take place when the baby will be three months of age. A three month old baby is healthy and active due to breastfeed. Considerable weight gain is seen as compared to first month or after birth. This is the time you should appreciate the mother that she has exclusively breast fed her baby and also appreciate family members that they supported both mother and the baby. Weighing the baby during this visit will help demonstrate the rapid gain in weight of the baby. The worker will also be able to ask whether the planned doses of immunization have been given to the baby.

How to start the conversation:

Greet the mother and the family. Gradually come to the topic of health of mother and baby. Start the session by inquiring about the health of the mother and the family. After initial chit chat ask how the mother has been feeding the baby. Ask for any problems in breastfeeding, listen carefully and take notes if required. Mother should get the answers to her questions and problems during this session. Now weigh the baby, Check record of immunization and inform family members about baby's weight gain with the help of counselling card 9 picture A. Also draw their attention towards this beautiful reality with the help of picture B that their baby is picking toys with hands, plays, and smiles which means that his mind is developing.



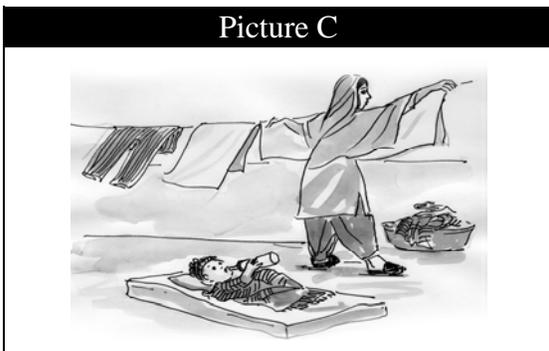
Baby's weight is increasing



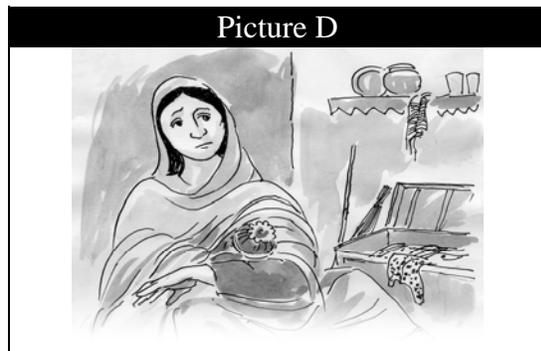
Child's brain is developing because he holds things, plays and smiles

Expected problems at three months:

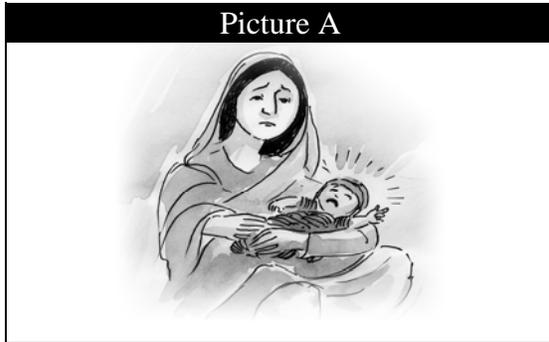
After showing advantages of breastfeed established by good growth of the baby, pay attention to the expected problems. The biggest problem of a mother of 3 month old baby is how she balances between the busy home schedule and baby's demand for milk. Many mothers start top feeding at three months because of domestic duties and less time, and think that this will make their life easier. With the help of counselling card 9 picture C ask if woman in the picture is thinking positive. Now with picture D, tell her that thinking of mother in the previous picture was not positive and the positive thinking is that mother can do house hold in a good manner if baby is healthy, for which breastfeed is necessary. Top feed can cause many illnesses in the baby.



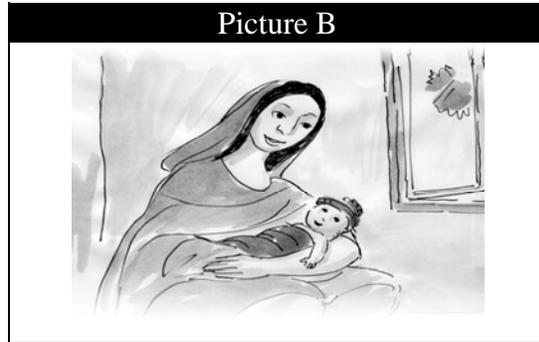
I have to do other jobs as well



I can do the chores only if the baby is healthy for which BF is required



My milk is insufficient because of which baby remains hungry



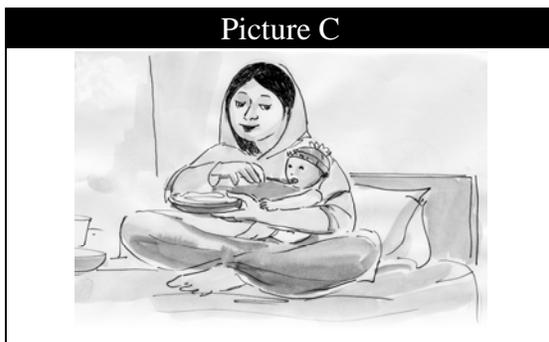
My feed gets digested quickly because of which my baby is happy and growing

Perception about Low milk output:

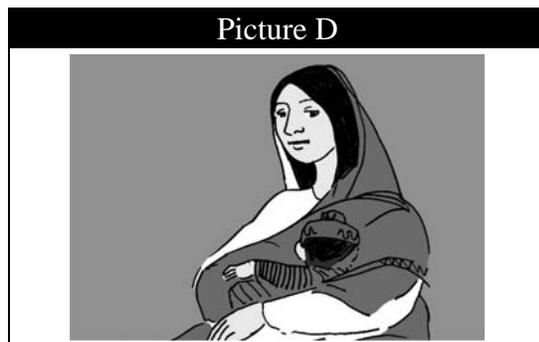
Many mothers start bottle feed along with breastfeed because of the perception that they are producing in sufficient milk. They feel that their baby is weak and not growing. Owing to the rapid growth, the baby's demand increase and he cries again and again for more milk, mothers think that their milk is less in quantity and they stop breastfeeding or start adding other milk. Show picture A on counselling card 10 and ask the mother what does she think about the mother shown in picture and does she feel the same? Now show picture B and try to figure out her opinion about this mother. Repeat this point that if baby is gaining weight and passing urine five or six times a day, it means he/she is getting enough quantity of milk.

Appropriate time is 6 months:

Another idea that distracts the minds of a healthy baby's mother and family is that baby is growing fast and more milk or food is required. Semi solid foods are started to very little babies under this perception which is harmful. The diet which a stomach is not ready to accept, can damage the stomach. Showing picture C on counselling card 10 and ask about the mother shown in that picture. Now ask views about picture D. If the mother describes first picture incorrect and the second correct, greet her. If she says that 3 months baby require other diet along with breast milk, tell her that this is not appropriate and can harm the child. Also tell her that you will further discuss this in the next session.



My baby is growing and needs additional food



My baby is growing fast but I will start additional food only at 6 months

Concluding the visit:

Appreciate family members and especially mother on taking good care of the baby. Tell them that baby will gain more weight and his mental development will also take place in the coming days if breastfeeding is continued.

With the help of points given at the end of counselling card 10, explain following points:

1. Exclusively breastfeed the baby. Do not give any other diet.
2. Other family members should continue helping mother in the domestic work so that she takes care of baby's diet in a better way.
3. Tell the mother that if a child passes urine five or six times a day, it shows that he is getting enough milk.
4. Explain also that next to weight gain is baby's mental and physical development.
5. If mother will continue breastfeeding, next months will bring more happiness.
6. Inform mother about the time and date of the next session.

Role Play:

With the help of counselling card 10 explain that baby's crying sometime after feeding does not necessarily mean that the baby is getting less milk. If the weight is increasing and the baby is passing urine five or six times a day; the baby is getting enough milk.

Visit 6: At 4 months

Exclusive Breastfeeding to ensure weight gain and muscular development

Objectives:

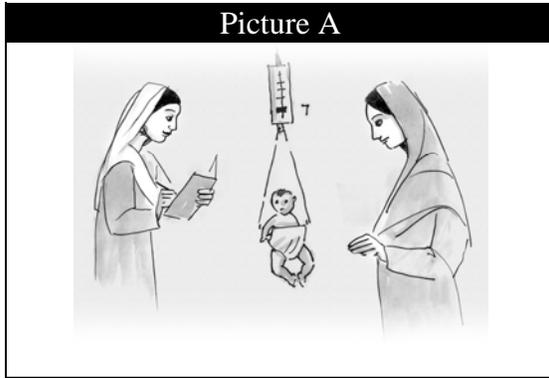
At the end of this visit the mother and family members should understand the following:

1. Exclusive breastfeed is the best diet for baby for first six months.
2. According to the new research the age of weaning for a child is six months and not four months.
3. If a baby passes urine five or six times a day, it is a proof that the baby is getting enough milk.
4. Four to five months is the time for weight gain and for the development of brain and muscles. Breast milk is the best nourishment for all this.

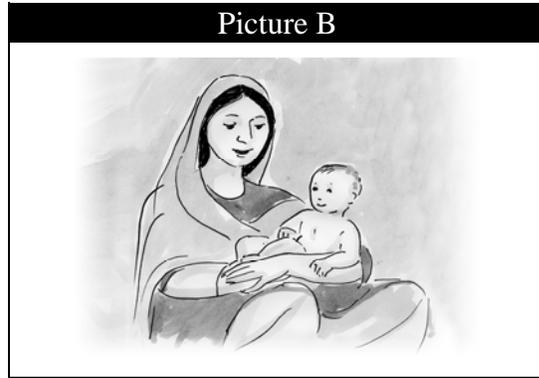
Fourth month is the time when a healthy baby looks active and playful in the mother's lap. Weight gain seems considerable as compared to his birth weight. The child holds his neck on his own. This is the time when mother and family members, start thinking about "weaning" the child off breast milk. Previously weaning at 4 months was a standard practice. Today we know that weaning this early predisposes the child to certain diseases. Experts therefore recommend that the semi solids should be started at 6 months of age. During this visit, the health worker is expected to explain this and the fact that child's brain is now maturing and muscles are developing which needs supply of exclusive mother feed for another two months.

How to start the conversation:

Greet the family and gradually come to the topic of infant's health and diet. Ask mother and the family members, how was the experience of caring and nurturing during the previous month. Ask specifically about mother's perceptions and problems. Listen attentively and take notes if required. Tell her that in today's session you will discuss these problems. Now check baby's weight and record of immunization. Appreciate mother and the family members on taking good care of the baby. With the help of counselling card 11 picture A, explain that baby's weight shows whether he is getting enough food or not. Also explain with the help of picture B that with weight gain, neck holding is a sign that baby's brain and muscles are developing in a good manner.



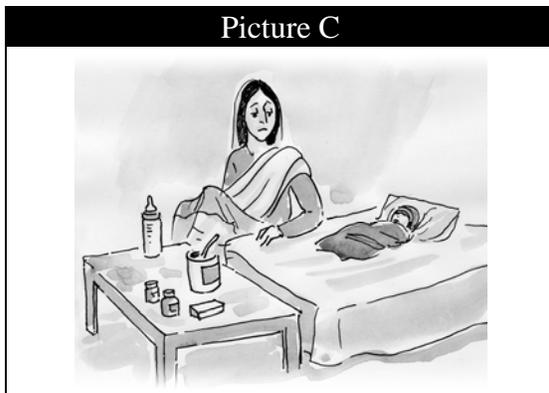
Infant's weight reflects whether he/she is getting adequate nutrition



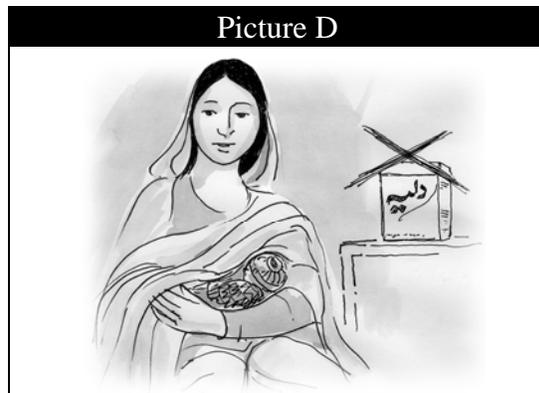
A 4 month baby demonstrates neck-holding which is a sign of mental & muscular development

Why Exclusive breastfeed for six months:

Discuss the problems that mother had out in the beginning. Discuss if she is worried about heavy work load, as doubts about less milk or is not satisfied with child's growth. Tell her that most important task is baby's fostering and negligence towards it can make the child ill leading to increased burden for the mother. If she has any doubts about milk out put, tell her that baby's passing urine six or eight times means that baby is getting milk in sufficient amount. Explain that a happy and active baby whose weight is increasing is ample evidence of adequate nourishment. Now ask mother and the family members about the exact age of weaning the child? If they say 4 months, don't prove them wrong but explain to them that according to the new research this age has been changed. With the help of counselling card number 11, picture C; ask mother's point of view about the problem that baby in the picture might be having. Explain that kidneys become capable of filtering all wastes from body of six months. Giving food other than mother's milk puts pressure on the immature kidneys and such children can become very sick and they look like the one shown in the picture. Explain with the help of picture D that even baby's stomach before six months is not strong. Baby can be a victim of diarrhoea if he is given something else except Breast feeding.



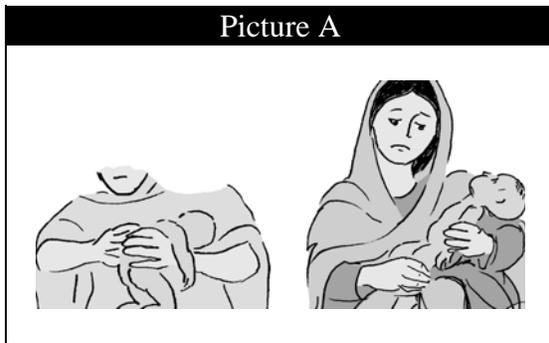
Infants who are given semi-solids before 6 months have to face problems of kidneys and other systems



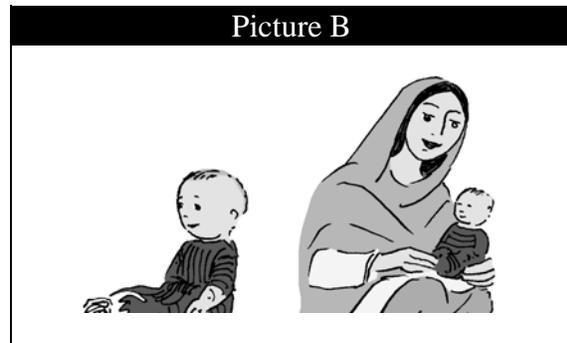
At 4 months, infant's stomach is weak and cannot digest solids

Brain and Muscle development:

Explain that *chilla* was the time when protection against infections was necessary for the baby. Next 2 ½ was the time of weight gain and now is the time of brain and muscle development. Lift the baby and show how he manages to hold his neck. Demonstrate how neck holding in the child has already developed, and explain that now the child will sit, crawl, stand, and then walk, which are all signs of brain development. Show picture A in counselling card 12 and ask mother or family members what could be the problem with the baby? Now show them picture B and ask how do they find this baby? Also ask them how do they want to see their baby? Explain that baby's development can be like the one in picture B only if the baby is given breastfeed for another couple of months.



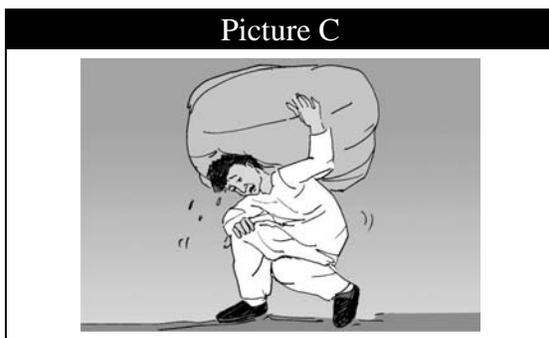
Inappropriate diet hampers the development of infants



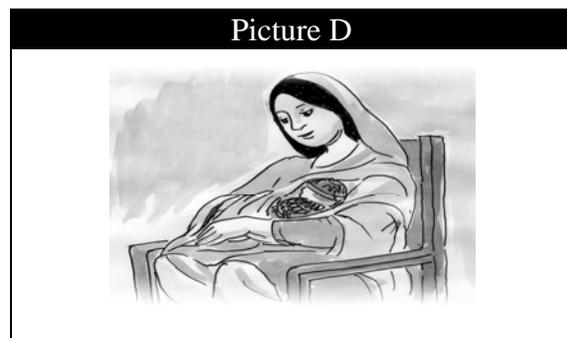
Only exclusively breastfed children develop in a normal way

Exclusive breastfeed for another 2 months:

Explain to the mother and the family members that baby needs exclusive breast milk for another two months. This will ensure prevention from disease, a continued weight gain, proper development and a high degree of intelligence. Any other diet especially semi solid foods can be highly dangerous. Show Counselling card 12 picture C and ask the mother that can a little child lift this heavy bundle? Clarify that baby's kidneys are weak and they can't bear the load of waste products of heavy food. Also explain with the help of picture D that a little baby can swallow semi solid food only if it is sitting properly which is possible at six months. Therefore only breastfeed is the best nutrient for the infant for another two months.



Lifting weight more than one's capacity harm the body



Giving exclusive breast feed for another 2 months is necessary for child's health

Concluding the visit:

Appreciate mother and family members on taking good care of baby. Explain them that in coming days baby will gain weight and achieve the development of muscles of the body. Help them to learn the following points given in counselling card 12:

1. Exclusively breastfeed the baby. Do not give any other diet.
2. Other family members should continue helping mother in the domestic work so that she takes care of baby's diet in a better way.
3. Tell the mother that if a child passes urine five or six times a day, it shows that he is getting enough milk.
4. Explain also that next to weight gain is baby's mental and physical development.
5. If mother will continue breastfeeding, next months will bring more happiness.
6. Inform mother about the time and date of the next session

Role Play:

With the help of counselling card 12, make the mother understand that neck holding is a sign of baby's brain development and muscular strength. Explain that this was achieved because of exclusive breast feeding. Also explain that baby's kidneys are immature and not capable of excreting waste matters produced from heavy food.

Visit 7: 5 months

Exclusive Breastfeeding for Muscular Growth and Mental Development

Objectives:

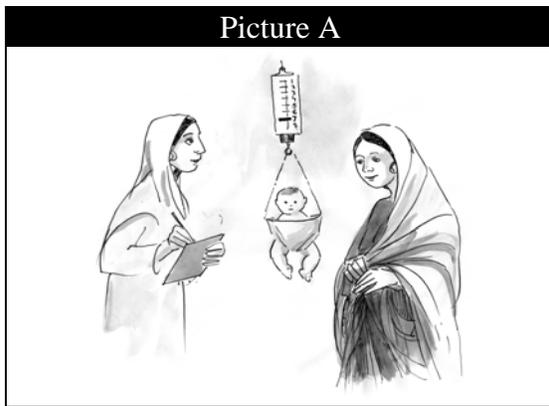
At the end of this visit the mother and the family members should understand the following:

1. Breast milk is the best diet till the completion of 6 months.
2. The difficult period in baby's nurturing is over; only two months are left in which baby will complete a major stage of life.
3. Other family members should continue helping mother in domestic work so that she takes care of the baby in a better way.
4. If baby pass urine five or six times a day, this proves enough milk is going in to the body.

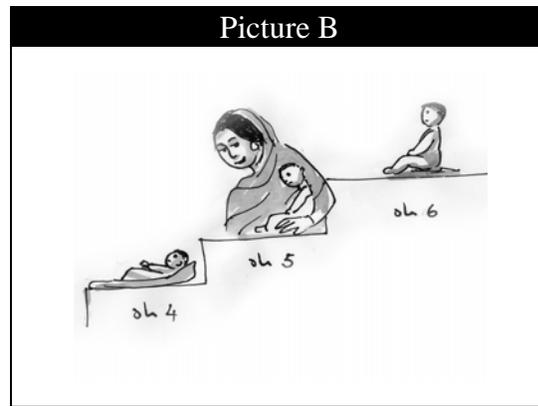
According to lady health worker's monthly schedule, this visit will be conducted when the child will be 5 months old. Five months is the time when all the efforts of lady health worker are about to bear fruits. After a month baby will complete an important milestone in the initial stage. Mother and the whole family need to be congratulated on this achievement. The L.H.W should remind that one month is still left in which the mother needs to carry on the healthy practice of exclusive breastfeeding. It should be established that the muscular system of the baby is yet to mature fully as s/he cannot sit without support and that swallowing solids will become easy once the muscles are strong.

How to start the conversation:

Greet the mother, baby and the family. Gradually come to the topic of baby's health and development by talking about baby's health and food. Ask how has been the experience of caring and nurturing during the last one month? Ask specifically about mother's perceptions and problems. Listen attentively and take notes if required. Tell the mother that you will discuss these issues in today's session. Now weigh the baby according to counselling card 13 picture A and tell mother and the family members the difference of baby's weight from last month. Now according to picture B, try to make baby sit without support. A five months baby cannot sit without support. Tell this to family members and also remind that baby's sitting without any support is a sign of muscular growth that the baby achieves at 6 months and which is very important for swallowing the food.



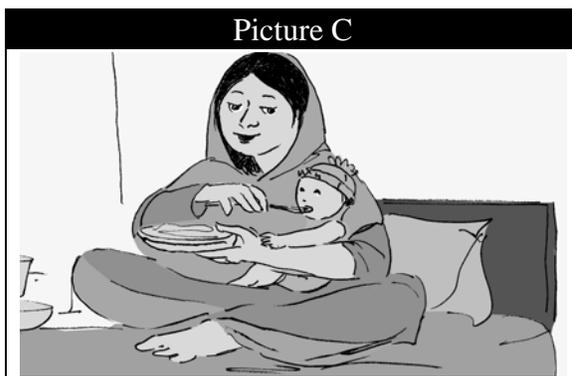
Picture A
Weigh the infant and check the immunization record



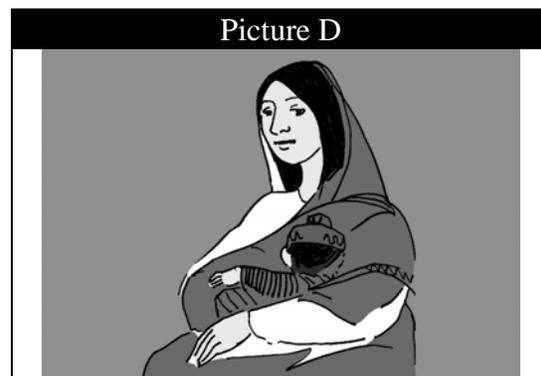
Picture B
A 5 months old infant can neither sit independently nor swallow and digest solids

Perceptions in mother's mind:

Talk about the problems mentioned by the mothering at the beginning of the session. Many mothers and family members of healthy five month old babies think that the baby has grown and extra care related to baby's food is not necessary. Being overworked, perceptions about less milk output or baby's growth can also be in their minds which can be discussed like the previous session. Show the counselling card 13 picture C, and ask about the problem depicted. Explain that feeding solid food at five months can be harmful even for the healthy babies. Now show picture D and ask about the appropriate age for semi-solid food. Appreciate on correct answer. If the answer is incorrect, tell them politely that breastfeed is the best diet up to six months of age.



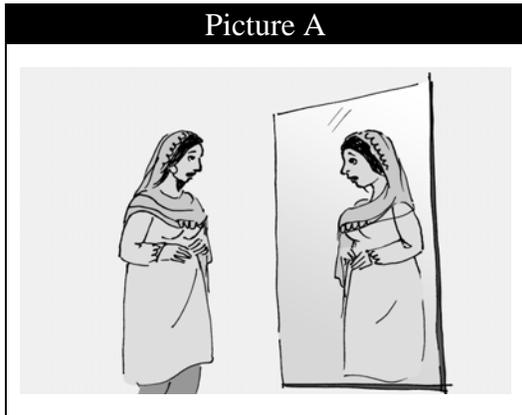
Picture C
Beginning solid foods can be dangerous even at the age of five months



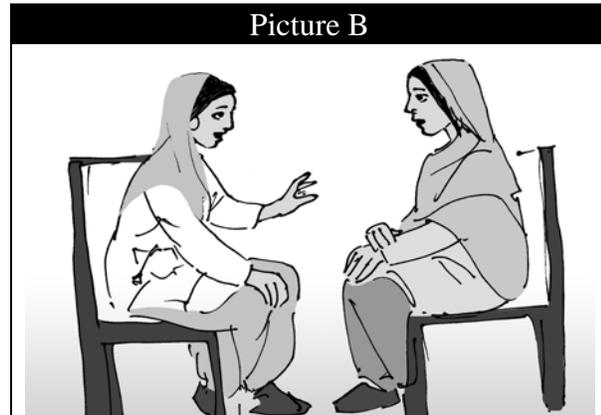
Picture D
Appropriate time for semi-solids is 6 months and before that only mother's feed is the best

Some mothers start thinking that their body is getting out of shape because of feeding their baby. Ask their opinion about the woman in the picture shown in counselling card 14 picture A. She will second the feeling, if such thought do occur to her mind. Tell her that it is only a misconception. Mothers, who continue physical work along with breastfeed and take care of their health, do not get out of shape. In comparison; women who indulge in over eating and do not do any physical work, become obese and shapeless

even before becoming a mother. Now show picture B and tell that breastfeeding the baby is actually physically useful for the mother because it guards against breast cancer.



Continued breastfeeding will make me fat and shapeless



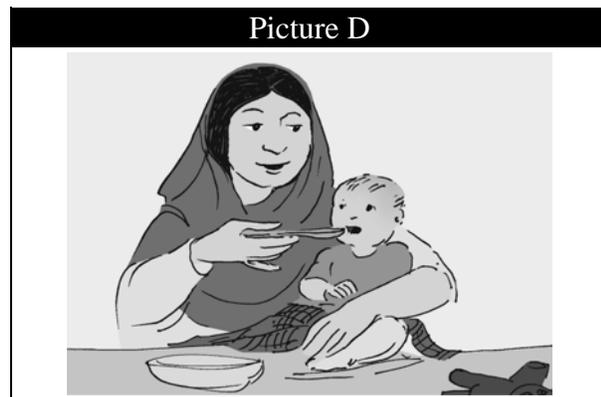
My doctor says that feeding my baby will prevent me from breast cancer

Just one month:

Explain that the baby needs exclusive breastfeed for another one month. This will ensure proper development and a high degree of intelligence as it prevented diseases, and enabled continued weight gain. Like previous session, emphasise on baby's weak kidneys. Explain that as adults eat food only when they are sitting upright, a child can swallow semi solids only in a sitting posture which is possible at 6 months of age.



Addition of other foods before 6 months can lead to more episodes of diarrhoea and kidney problems in the infants



Infants who can sit without support can easily swallow the food

Concluding the Visit:

Appreciate family members especially mother on taking good care of baby. Explain that baby will become strong and start sitting like the way baby has gained weight, the muscles have grown strong and neck gained stability. Remind them the following points given in counselling card 12:

1. Exclusively breastfeed the baby. Do not give any other diet.
2. Other family members should continue helping mother in the domestic work so that she takes care of baby's diet in a better way.
3. Tell the mother that if a child passes urine five or six times a day, it shows that he is getting enough milk.
4. Explain also that next to weight gain is baby's mental and physical development.
5. If mother will continue breastfeeding, next months will bring more happiness.
6. Inform mother about the time and date of the next session

Role Play:

Explain with counselling card 14 that baby is mature enough but semi solid food is still one month away. Being careful for one month will be helpful for the rest of life.

Additional difficult scenarios and their solutions

We have used the commonly seen misconceptions on breastfeeding for developing various sections of this manual. The LHW may come across certain difficult situations that are not very common yet it is in appropriate to neglect them. Following are some such situations and their possible solutions. These problems will be further discussed during training.

1. Baby who is not gaining weight

Most of the mothers and family members in our society keep complaining about the “weakness” of the child. An increase in weight demonstrated at the weighing scale however does satisfy them. If there is a complaint of no weight gain, the worker should weigh the baby and show it to the family members for their satisfaction. Actually underweight baby would be very few. If a baby does not gain weight even 2 to 3 months after birth; it should be referred to some child specialist.

2. Taking medicines for some illness and having doubts about breast feeding

Normally mothers can breastfeed their baby while taking medicines like calcium, folic acid, iron tablets, pain killers and antibiotics. There are very few illnesses and treatments because of which a mother cannot breast feed. Normally doctors mention it with the prescription. So if any mother in your community is taking medicine and doctor has not advised against breast feeding, lady health worker should also advise to continue breast feeding.

3. Perceptions that mother’s illness decreases the milk output

It is just a misconception. All the common illnesses do not cause deficiency in milk output. Mother should consult a doctor and act according to his advice if she is seriously ill.

4. Female child receives partial attention and feeding

Gender preference is a common problem in our society. Such families show carelessness in breastfeeding the baby girl and showing lack of interest in supporting mother. If you are dealing with such families, make them realise that a girl plays an equally important role in a family’s betterment. Not giving breastfeeding will make her ill and hence expenses will increase.

5. Next pregnancy makes the mother stop breast feeding

Many misconceptions are found in this regard which are baseless. Explain to the mother and the family members that child spacing is important for better up bringing of children. Spacing two births will make breastfeeding, caring of necessities and better up bringing

easy. In case the next pregnancy has occurred, the best thing a mother can do for her baby is to continue breastfeed. However it is important that the mother take special care of her diet during this period.

6. Contraceptives and continuation of breast feeding

No contraceptive is required during the first month after birth. Injections can be used after first month, whereas contraceptive pills should be avoided at least for first six months.

7. Breast milk stools falsely believed as diarrhoea leading to stoppage of breast feeding

Mother milk quickly gets digested and assimilates in to the body. As a result, the waste matters are also formed quickly and baby passes stools more frequently. Many mothers perceive it as diarrhoea and become tense. It is very important to explain that these stools are normal in breast fed babies. Breast feeding should be continued in this situation and no further action is required

8. Bottle fed babies are perceived to be healthier

It has been observed that babies who are given bottle feed look stronger and healthier. Mothers develop a false impression and start thinking about giving bottle feeding with BF. It is very important to tell such mothers that being fat and being healthy are two different things. Health is a state in which a baby grows as well as become active and intelligent and research has proved that such a state is possible only with breast milk.