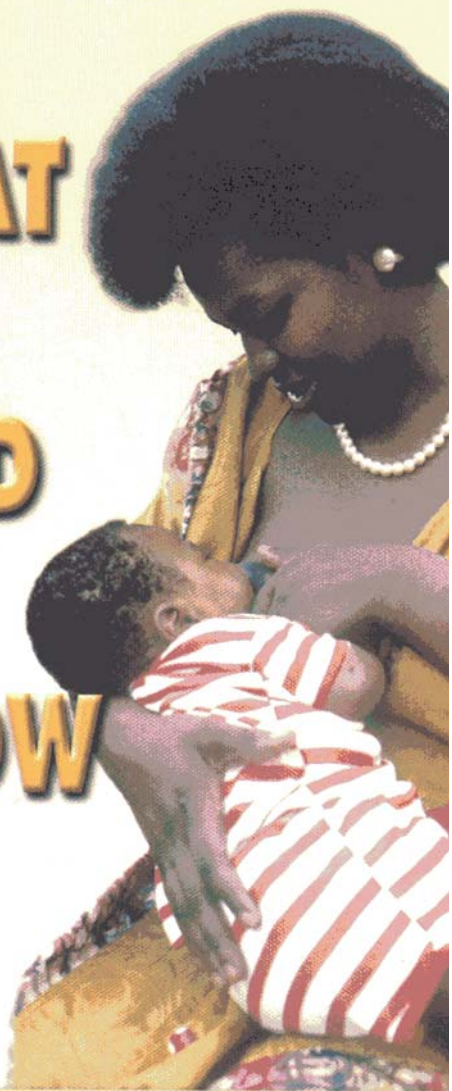


**Exclusive  
BREASTFEEDING  
is BEST!**

**WHAT  
YOU  
NEED  
TO  
KNOW**



**Breastfeeding Week: 1-7 August**

## Exclusive Breastfeeding

Exclusive breastfeeding is feeding the baby on breastmilk alone. For the first six months of the baby's life, no water, glucose, milk formula, gripe water, laxative, nor any other form of liquid, semi-solids or solids are given to the baby. Breastmilk contains all the nutrients required by the baby for proper growth and development during this period.

## The benefits to the Baby

- ◆ Breastfed babies are healthier and get sick less often.
- ◆ Breastmilk provides all the nutrients a baby needs for the first 6 months.
- ◆ Breastfeeding helps protect babies from common illnesses including diarrhoea and pneumonia. The first milk secreted from the breast is called colostrum, a thick yellowish milk. Colostrum is particularly rich in elements which help to protect the baby against infection.
- ◆ Breastmilk is easily digested by the baby.
- ◆ Breastfed babies enjoy better emotional and social development.
- ◆ Breastfed babies are protected from the dangers of contamination that can occur as a result of unhygienic preparation of artificial feeds, contaminated water, and over-dilution of formula.

## The benefits to the Mother

- ◆ Breastmilk is clean, safe and cheap. The mother does not have to spend her money on baby milk.

- ◆ Breastfeeding prevents excessive bleeding after delivery by promoting quick return of the uterus to its normal state.
- ◆ Breastfeeding provides a perfect opportunity for building a close bond between mother and baby.
- ◆ Exclusive breastfeeding can be used as a family planning method for the first "six months" after delivery. However, this period varies from woman to woman, and cannot be used as a standard.
- ◆ Breastfeeding helps prevent iron deficiency anaemia.
- ◆ Mothers who breastfeed have a lower risk of breast and ovarian cancer.
- ◆ Breastfeeding costs less in terms of health care expenses, as breastfed infants get ill less often.

## The benefits to the Family and Society

- ◆ Human milk is a natural resource. Breastmilk provides food security for the first six months of life.
- ◆ Breastfeeding saves money which would have been spent on milk formula.
- ◆ Breastfeeding does not require fuel/time to prepare. (Breastfeeding is environmentally-friendly).

- ◆ The country saves foreign exchange when it does not have to import baby milk formula.

## Benefits to the Employer

- ◆ Less Absenteeism – mothers are less likely to take time off work to look after sick children.
- ◆ Better productivity – workers are more productive when they are not distracted by family concerns such as sick children.
- ◆ Employers who accommodate workers' family needs, such as facilitating breastfeeding, are likely to benefit from increased employee loyalty and lower staff turnover.

## But did you know that...

- ◆ 1 out of 5 adult Zambians are HIV positive.
- ◆ 1 out of 4 pregnant women are HIV positive.
- ◆ 3 out of 4 pregnant women DO NOT have HIV.
- ◆ HIV can be transmitted from an infected mother to her baby during pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding.
- ◆ Giving a baby other foods apart from breastmilk before the age of six months can cause sores in the intestines and increase the passage of HIV into the baby's body.
- ◆ It is possible to protect your baby against HIV. Have an HIV test so that you know your status and can make better plans for you and your baby.

## **Breastfeeding in the context of HIV/AIDS**

- ◆ It should be noted that not all babies exposed to HIV through breastfeeding will become infected. Eight or 9 out of 10 babies exposed to HIV through breastmilk will NOT become infected.
- ◆ Exclusive breastfeeding may help reduce HIV transmission through breastmilk.
- ◆ Correct positioning of the baby may prevent breast conditions, which increase the risk of HIV transmission.
- ◆ If you have any problems with breastfeeding go to the nearest health centre as soon as possible.

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is BEST**