



Infant Feeding and HIV: Science and Practice

Hosted by the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
Sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)



At the International AIDS Society 2009 Conference in Cape Town, South Africa

Date: Sunday, 19th July 2009

Time: 12:30-14:30

Location: Mini Room 4

Session overview

Infant feeding is one of the most controversial and complex topics in the field of HIV and AIDS. While breastfeeding is beneficial to mothers and their infants, in the presence of HIV it also introduces the risk of vertical transmission from a mother to her infant. This satellite session will explore the science of infant feeding in the context of HIV, examine the current global recommendations, and review practical experiences and lessons learnt. Each presentation will be followed by time for questions and open discussion among the participants and presenters.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand the terminology relevant to the field of infant feeding in the context of HIV.
- Identify the risks and benefits of breastfeeding and replacement feeding in the context of HIV.
- Discuss the current global guidance on infant feeding in the context of HIV.
- Identify key challenges to implementing the global guidance on infant feeding in the context of HIV in resource-limited settings.
- Discuss best practices in promoting optimal infant feeding HIV-positive mothers in resource-limited settings.

Presentation 1: The science of infant feeding in the context of HIV

Presented by Dr. Louise Kuhn, Columbia University

The past two decades have seen a rapid evolution in the science and guidelines of infant feeding in the context of HIV. While complete avoidance of breastfeeding is the only way to fully eliminate the risk of vertical transmission of HIV through breast milk, this practice is not a viable option in many circumstances: breastfeeding remains the cultural norm in much of the developing world. Furthermore, numerous studies have demonstrated the association between breastfeeding and a decreased risk of infant illness, including respiratory infections and diarrheal disease, and death during the first year of life. Research has evaluated a number of infant feeding methods in the context of HIV, including exclusive breastfeeding, shortened duration of breastfeeding (less than six months), replacement feeding, and the use of antiretroviral drugs for the mother and/or infant during the lactation period. This presentation will explore the key scientific findings in this area and review the risks and benefits of different infant feeding practices in the context of HIV.

Presentation 2: Global guidelines: Current WHO recommendations and upcoming changes

Presented by Dr. Nigel Rollins, World Health Organization

In October 2006, the World Health Organization (WHO) convened an expert panel to discuss recent developments in the field of infant feeding and HIV. Researchers and public health practitioners from around the world came together to review WHO's infant feeding guidelines in light of the latest data on breastfeeding, replacement feeding, and the associated risks of HIV transmission and other infant morbidities and mortality. Following this meeting, WHO released a consensus statement and revised recommendations

for infant feeding practices in the context of HIV. In November 2008, WHO convened an expert consultation on new and emerging evidence on the use of antiretroviral drugs. This presentation will review the current WHO guidelines—highlighting key changes from previous versions—and discuss how research and programmatic findings from the past three years may be reflected in the upcoming revision of the guidelines later this year.

Presentation 3: What is the reality in the field?

Part A: Results of a survey on infant and young child feeding in the context of the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation’s HIV prevention, care and treatment programs

Presented by Corinne Mazzeo, Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation

The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatrics AIDS Foundation is a leader in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV. In this presentation, we will share findings from a Foundation-wide survey on infant and young child feeding in the context of our Family AIDS Initiatives in 14 countries. The survey addressed national policies as well as program implementation, and solicited feedback on the barriers and challenges faced by the country programs in light of the recent science and guidelines on infant feeding.

Part B: Findings from the Kenya Infant Feeding Assessment (KIFA) and related implementation activities

Presented by Margaret Waithaka, PATH/Kenya

In May 2008, PATH launched a cross-sectional study in the Western and Eastern Provinces of Kenya to assess infant feeding practices and counseling, specifically focusing on the transition period from exclusive breastfeeding to replacement feeding, a period of high risk to the infant. The study targeted HIV-infected women at PMTCT and MCH clinics in order to evaluate HIV-infected mothers’ experiences as they stopped breastfeeding and the associated impact on their children. This presentation will review findings and observations from the KIFA study and discuss activities that the IYCN Project is now implementing in Western Kenya based on the KIFA results.

Session Agenda

Time	Presentation	Speaker / Facilitator
12.30-12.35	Opening remarks	Nick Hellman - Executive Vice President, Medical & Scientific Affairs, EGPAF
12.35-12.55	The science of infant feeding in the context of HIV	Louise Kuhn - Associate Professor of Epidemiology, Columbia University
12.55-13.05	<i>Questions & Discussion</i>	Facilitated by Christian Pitter - Director, Global Technical Policy, EGPAF
13.05-13.25	Global guidance: WHO recommendations on infant feeding in the context of HIV	Nigel Rollins - Scientist, World Health Organization and Honorary Professor of Maternal and Child Health, University of KwaZulu-Natal
13.25-13.35	<i>Questions & Discussion</i>	Facilitated by Christian Pitter
13.35-14.05	What is the reality in the field?	Corinne Mazzeo - Technical Officer, EGPAF <i>and</i> Margaret Waithaka - Monitoring & Evaluation Advisor, PATH/Kenya
14.05-14.30	<i>Questions & Discussion</i>	Facilitated by Christian Pitter