

## PRACTICE 6



### **Give newborn infants no food or drink other than breastmilk, unless medically indicated.**

- A.** Breastfed babies are given only breastmilk, unless ordered for a medical condition.
- B.** When supplement is needed, it is given by an alternative feeding method not requiring an artificial nipple.
- C.** Parents are taught how to use alternative feeding methods.
- D.** When supplement is necessary for a medical condition, parents are instructed on hand expression or other forms of milk expression.

### **Early supplementation with formula is associated with decreased exclusivity and duration of breastfeeding in the first 6 months of life.**

Birth facilities can have an impact on the infant's health long-term by not promoting formula supplementation. The success of promoting exclusive breastfeeding and avoiding supplementation relies on successful implementation of the other practices. For example, if mother and baby are not rooming in, it is difficult to respond appropriately to a hungry infant and supplementation may occur. Training is also very important. Staff must understand why exclusive breastfeeding is important before they will support it.

### **From the Texas Ten Step toolkit:**

[http://texastenstep.org/starachiever-texastenstep/Star\\_Achiever\\_Ten\\_Step\\_Modules/resources-and-tools/](http://texastenstep.org/starachiever-texastenstep/Star_Achiever_Ten_Step_Modules/resources-and-tools/)

Breastfed infants should be given only breastmilk unless specifically ordered by a healthcare provider because of a medical indication, and only with the mother's informed consent.

- Educate staff about the short- and long-term risks of supplementation and about how to educate parents about supplemental feeding so they can make an informed choice before consenting. Consent given for a supplemental feeding does not imply consent for use of bottles or artificial nipples.
- When supplemental feedings are given, the feeding volume should not exceed the physiologic capacity of the newborn stomach. In the first few days of life, volumes of under 20cc should be given at each feeding. (See Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Protocol 3, linked below)
- When supplementation is medically indicated, the infant's nutritional status should be continually assessed, and breastmilk should be used whenever possible.
- Be sure that staff understand it is important both to avoid supplementing breastmilk with any other food (e.g., formula) and to avoid using a pacifier to soothe the baby during the infant's hospital stay. All of a healthy newborn's sucking needs should be met at the breast.

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### Reasons to avoid supplements:

#### Supplements may:

- Replace optimal species-specific nutrition and immune protection.
- Introduce harmful microbes or allergens to the infant.
- Create nipple confusion or flow if received via bottles.
- Result in engorgement of the mother's breasts.
- Interfere with establishing milk supply.
- Reduce milk supply.
- Reduce breastfeeding duration.
- Add unnecessary cost to infant feeding.
- Undermine the mother's confidence in breastfeeding and in her infant-care skills.

### Resources:

#### **Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, protocol #3, Supplementation.**

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#### **Neonatal stomach volume and physiology suggest feeding at 1-hour intervals, Acta Paediatr, 102: 773-777**

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#### **From the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative, "Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria" Interim version, for hospitals having assessments through 12/31/22. Appendix B:**

"Almost all mothers can breastfeed successfully, which includes initiating breastfeeding within the first hour of life, breastfeeding exclusively for the first 6 months, and continuing breastfeeding along with giving appropriate complimentary foods up to 2 years of age or beyond.

The facility should develop a protocol/procedure that describes the current, evidence-based medical indications for supplementation. Staff and care providers should be trained to utilize the protocol/procedure as guidance in the case of supplementation. A facility may utilize the recommendations of national and international authorities (e.g. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO), and Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM)) in developing this protocol/procedure, however the facility is responsible for ensuring that its medical indications for supplementation are supported by current evidence."