

BREAST FEEDING POLICY



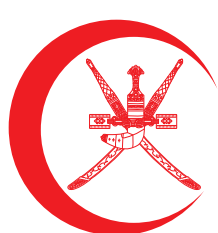
Breast milk is the most nutritious and beneficial food for newborns and babies. Breastmilk provides an infant's total nutrient requirement for the first six months of life. When combined with adequate introduction of complementary foods at the right age, it is an invaluable source of nourishment until 2 years of age.

It is the policy of the Ministry of Health that breastfeeding be adopted in all health institutions, government or private to become "Baby friendly" through implementation of the following steps by all health personnel:

- 1- Place babies in skin to skin contact with their mothers immediately following birth and help mothers initiate breastfeeding within an hour of birth.
- 2- Do not separate newborn babies from mothers; allow mothers and newborns to remain together 24 hours after birth .
- 3- Orient all staff on the National Breastfeeding Policy and train them on the benefits and management of breastfeeding .
- 4- Inform every mother about the benefits and management of breastfeeding.
- 5- Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation even if newborn baby and mother are separated for medical reasons. In such cases mothers should be taught to express breast milk in the hospital and at home as much as possible. Babies should be given only their mother's breast milk and not from another mother.
- 6- Encourage mothers to breastfeed on demand and not on schedule.
- 7- Give newborns no milk substitutes, food, drink or water unless medically indicated.
- 8- Give no artificial teats or pacifiers to newborn babies.
- 9- Do not supply bottle or milk substitutes to newborn except when medically indicated. No free or subsidized breastmilk substitutes should be provided to any health facility. Such supplies are not to be offered, nor accepted by health services or health workers at any level, whether private or government. Any such products which are required by health institutions must be obtained through normal procurement procedures.
- 10- Foster establishment of breastfeeding support groups in the hospital and in the community.



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