

TIPs Tool 3

Counselling Guide

COMMON FEEDING PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATING IN TRIALS OF IMPROVED PRACTICES

PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDED ACTION BY AGE GROUP AND HEALTH STATE

Age Group: 0 to 6 months

Ideal feeding pattern: Exclusive breastfeeding

Problem 1: Mother not breastfeeding exclusively

Recommendations:

- 1.a If child is not yet breastfed and is being given foods before breast feeding, put child to the mother's breast immediately and breastfeed frequently, day and night. The more the child sucks, the more the mother produces breast milk.
- 1.b If throwing away colostrum, give colostrum to the child because it protects the baby from illnesses while the baby is developing its own immune system.
- 1.c If giving water (water, honey or any other fluids) because the child gets or looks thirsty, stop giving water or honey, breast milk is a clean and safe liquid that contains enough water and all the food for the baby during the first 5 months of life.
- 1.d Stop giving porridge or other foods/liquids before 6 months and breastfeed more frequently: on demand, i.e. at least 8-10 times per day (day and night).

Problem 2: Mother tries to breastfeed exclusively, but feels she is not produce enough milk because the child cries often, resulting in the early introduction of weaning foods.

Recommendations:

- 2.a Stop introduction of other foods before the age of 6 months and breastfeed more frequently-2 more times per day, minimum of 8 times per 24 hours.
- 2.b Use both breasts at each feed and empty breasts completely by feeding longer.
- 2.c Increase nursing mother's intake of fluids, e.g. safe drinking water, soups with vegetables, fish, eggs or meat and juice seasonal/wild fruits. If the mother is already eating 3 meals a day, she should eat 2-3 extra spoonfuls of rice with the soup to enable her to produce more of the clean, safe and ready to suck breast milk. The mother can also eat snacks such as roasted/boiled groundnuts, corn or pumpkin seeds between the main family meals.

- 2.d Hold the baby in the right position (correct attachment to nipple) and feed frequently.
- 2.e Encourage the nursing mother to take a little more rest each day.
- 2.f Encourage the husband to increase support to the breastfeeding mother and encourage positive communication between the wife and husband.
- 2.g Encourage other members of the household to increase support to the breastfeeding mother so as to give her chance to rest and relax a little more.

Ideal feeding pattern: Breastfeed until the child is 2 years of age or beyond and wean child gradually from breast milk.

Problem 3: Abrupt weaning because the mother is pregnant

Recommendations:

- 3.a Continue breastfeeding a small infant during pregnancy. Breast milk from a pregnant mother is still very safe for the child.
- 3.b Increase nursing-pregnant mother's intake of fluids (soups), fish, meat and juicy seasonal fruits. The mother must give herself extra 3-4 fistfuls of rice to eat with the soup because she is now eating for 3 people, i.e. herself, the nursing child and
- 3.c Gradually wean the breast feeding child by introducing nutritious complementary foods.
- 3.d Use contraceptives to prevent early pregnancies in future.

Problem 4: Abrupt weaning because the mother is ill or dies.

Recommendations:

- 4.a Continue breastfeeding a small infant even if the mother is sick. Breast milk from a sick mother is still safe for the child.
- 4.b In the case of acute respiratory infections (colds, coughs, and in particular TB), the mother should cover her mouth with a cloth when she is breastfeeding and has close contact with the child.
- 4.c The mother should drink many fluids and eat regularly to help her get better soon and produce good milk for the child.

If the mother is extremely ill or dies:

- 4.d Get a wet nurse (another woman in the family/community) to continue breast feeding the child.

- 4.e If baby milk formulas are affordable, buy and prepare the milk formulas for such a child if less than 6 months. Make sure to follow instructions on the tin and not to use too much water.
- 4.f When feeding the child with milk formula, use clean utensils (glasses, spoons). Avoid using a baby bottle, because it becomes easily dirty and can cause the child to have diarrhoea.

Age Group: 6 months

Ideal feeding pattern: Frequent breastfeeding complemented by nutritious soft foods.

Problem 5: Child's rice porridge not nutrient-dense enough (child gets plain rice porridge with little salt)

Recommendations:

- 5.a Give the child one new food at a time, starting with 2-3 tablespoonfuls of a soft porridge per feed, feed the child 2 times a day in addition to breastfeeding on demand and gradually increase quantities of the new food over a 3 to 5-day period.
- 5.b As the child gets accustomed to eating a particular food, add the next new food into the child's diet, starting with small quantities and gradually increase quantities.
- 5.c Towards the end of the 6th month, start giving the child a mixture of two or more foods which the child is already accustomed to and gradually increase the quantities, depending on the child's appetite.

Age Group: 7-8 months

Ideal feeding pattern: Frequent breastfeeding complemented by nutritious soft foods.

Problem 6: Child's rice porridge not nutrient-dense enough (child eating plain porridge with little salt)

Recommendations:

- 6.a Enrich child's rice porridge with pounded groundnut, eggs, de-boned mashed fish or fish flour, pumpkin seed flour, finely chopped/pounded meat, a little oil and a little sugar if affordable.
- 6.b Feed the child 3 times a day and gradually increase quantities per feed to ½ a 250ml bowl.
- 6.c Add finely chopped vegetables to the child's food and cook for 2-3 minutes.

- 6.d Give mashed fruits (e.g. banana, papaya, orange, mango, etc.) to the child between the main meals.
- 6.e Store/buy and keep a small amount of groundnuts and pumpkin seeds specifically for enriching the child's rice porridge at time when family stocks are likely to go down. This helps to ensure variety in the child's diet.

Problem 7: Depending on the age of the child, the child is fed less, too few meals per day (in addition to breastfeeding on demand, or given too small amounts of the enriched rice porridge)

See Table below for details on the number of meals and quantity of food to give to the child, by age.

Recommendations:

- 7.a Feed one extra nutritious meal or snack every day.
- 7.b Increase serving by 1-2 tablespoonfuls each meal (or more if child will take more) and encourage child to eat the whole serving.

Age group: 9-11 months

Ideal feeding pattern: Continued breastfeeding, nutritious soft complementary foods and family foods.

Problem 8: Solid family foods introduced but child given the liquid part of the rice porridge

Recommendations:

- 8.a Make sure child is given plenty of mashed fish, finely chopped meat and mashed vegetables which form part of the rice porridge.
- 8.b Give nutritious snacks such as fruits (banana, mango, ripe papaya, wild fruits, etc) once a day.
- 8.c If child eats from same dish with others, give a separate serving in own plate and monitor and ensure that the child eats all the food.

Age Group: 12 months-2 years

Ideal feeding patterns: Eating with family diet plus extra feeds, with continued frequent breastfeeding.

Problem 9: Child fed less than meals per day because of the mother's heavy workload (during the rains and harvest)

Recommendations:

- 9.a Bulk preparation: Prepare some of the flours, e.g. groundnuts, pumpkin seed and dried fish flours in large quantities/stocks to feed the child for 1-2 weeks.

9.b If you are leaving the child with an old grandmother, teach the grandmother the proper way of preparing the food or prepare the food before leaving home and make sure the food is well protected from flies, etc.

9.c Give the child 3 times meal a day and increase the amount of the food to a full bowl at each meal.

9.d Give child different snacks, e.g. fresh fruits between the 3 complementary feeding meals twice a day.

Table 2: Daily Meals of Breastfed Children and Quantities By Age

Age of the Child in Months	Daily Meals of Complementary Food	Quantities of Uncooked Food for One Meal Per Child		Amount of Cooked Food an Average Child will usually Eat at Each Meal
		Rice-Based Complementary Food	Sweet potatoes or Taro-Based Complementary Food	
6	2 meals per day	2 tablespoons	½ bowl	Start with 2-3 tablespoon per feed and increase gradually, introducing one food at a time for the child to get accustomed to the new food
7-8	3 meals per day			Increase gradually to ½ bowl (250ml)
9-11	3 meals plus 1 snack per day	2½ tablespoons	1 bowl	Increase gradually from ½ -1 bowl (250 ml)
12-23	3 meals plus 2 snacks per day	3½ tablespoons	1½ bowls	One full 250ml bowl
If baby is not breastfeeding, give in addition, 1-2 glassed of milk per day, and 1-2 extra meals per day				

Feeding the Sick Child

Ideal feeding patterns: Continue feeding small quantities of soft easy to swallow nutritious foods frequently

Problem 10: Caregiver stops feeding or limits food intake while child has diarrhoea and is vomiting

Recommendations:

- 10.a Continue breastfeeding and breastfeed more often if the child is still breastfeeding
- 10.b Continue giving soft foods without spices if weaning and give small amounts at a time more frequently
- 10.c Select the food that the child likes most, exercise patience in feeding sick child, feeding small quantities more frequently

Feeding the Sick People with no appetite

Ideal feeding patterns: Give small meals of soft, nutritious and easy to digest foods to sick people

Problem 11: Sick people demanding expensive but not necessarily nutritious foods

Recommendations:

- 11.a Prepare soft, that are easy to digest and contain a good mixture of foods (i.e. rice or sweet potatoes + eggs or fish or meat + vegetables and fruits);
- 11.b Practice good personal and food hygiene to minimise possibility of infecting the patient and other members of the household

Problem 12: Looking after sick people takes a lot of time of the caregiver

Recommendations:

- 12.a Exercise patience when caring and feeding sick people but encourage them to do what they can still do by themselves;
- 12.b Share caring task with other members of family.

Ideal feeding patterns: Wash Hands with Soap before Meals

Problem 13: Small child washing hands in dirty water used by parents and older children

Recommendations:

- 13.a Stop giving children water that has been used by many others to wash their hands
- 13.b Wash hands by pouring clean water from cup for all household members
- 13.c Use soap to wash hands and if not available, use ashes.

Problem 14: Looking after sick people takes a lot of time of the caregiver and there is a risk of cross-infection between the patient and caregiver.

Recommendations:

- 14.a Practice good personal and food hygiene to minimize possibility of infecting the patient and other members of the household;
- 14.b Exercise patience when caring and feeding the sick but encourage them to do what they can still do by themselves;
- 14.c Share caring task with other members of the family.