

# *Breast milk is best for all babies*

*All infants should be breastfed exclusively from birth to six months*

Exclusive breastfeeding means giving your baby only breast milk with no supplementary feeding of any type (no water, juice, animal milk and solid foods) except for vitamins, minerals and medications prescribed by a doctor or healthcare worker when medically indicated

*Breast milk contains all the water, food and nutrients a baby needs for six months and provides protection from common respiratory tract infections and diarrhoea*

During a feed the first milk is called foremilk which is watery and quenches thirst. This watery milk contains a high lactose content with less fat than the milk that follows which is called hind milk. Hind milk is rich, higher in fats and is more filling. A baby should suckle for as long as he wants on a breast before being offered the other. If he is moved to the other breast before receiving the hind milk he will not be full and will cry often and not gain weight adequately

*Breastfeeding should start within the first hour after delivery as then a baby is alert and most eager to feed*

This helps stimulate milk production. During this period the baby should be put skin-to-skin with the mother as it helps regulate the baby's temperature and blood sugar level. Skin-to-skin contact helps mother and baby to bond and a baby fed this way is calmer and cries less

*Almost all mothers can produce enough breast milk, even for twins*

Milk production is dependent on supply and demand - the more a baby suckles, the more milk is produced. Both day and night feeds are important and there should be no feeding times. A baby will develop his own feeding schedule

*A working mother should continue breastfeeding once back at work*

During the last two weeks of maternity leave a mother should start practising expressing milk and cup feeding

