CARD ONE: COLOSTRUM

Put the baby to the breast immediately after delivery to ensure a healthy beginning for both mother and child.

Additional Points:

- Putting the baby immediately to the breast after birth helps the mother to expel the placenta and reduces the bleeding.

- Immediate breastfeeding helps the milk come in more rapidly.

- The yellow milk or colostrum helps clean the baby’s stomach and eliminate the first black stools.

- The yellow milk is the first vaccination for the child. It helps protect the child from infection.

- The yellow milk is God's way of welcoming the child into the world.
CARD TWO: EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING

Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding: Counselling Cards
CARD TWO: EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING

Breastmilk has all of the food, water, liquid and nutrients that your baby needs for the first six months. It is clean and wholesome for your growing infant. Exclusive breastfeeding means giving only breastmilk - and nothing else - for the first six months of your baby's life.

Additional Points:

- Exclusive breastfeeding means giving only breastmilk. That means giving absolutely no other liquids, teas, herbal preparations, pito, foods, koko or water -- only breastmilk -- through the first six months of life.

- Exclusively breastfed babies are generally healthier and have less diarrhoea and respiratory infections than babies that are not exclusively breastfed.

- Breastmilk has everything the baby needs to quench thirst and satisfy hunger. It is the best possible food and drink you can offer your child so that he/she grows to be strong and healthy.

- Breastfeeding helps create a strong and loving bond between you and your baby.
CARD THREE: NO WATER

Breastfeeding & Instant Feeding: Counselling Cards
CARD THREE: NO WATER

It is very important not to give the baby any water through the first six months of life. Give only breastmilk. Breastmilk contains plenty of water and it is clean and safe for your baby to drink.

Additional Points:

● Infants who are exclusively breastfed have less diarrhoea and fall ill less often. Only the water found in breastmilk is clean and safe enough for a young infant.

● Infants who are frequently breastfed get plenty of water from breastmilk. Approximately 90 percent of breastmilk is water. If a mother thinks that her infant is thirsty, she herself should drink water and breastfeed more often to quench the child's thirst.

● An infant's stomach is small. When the baby takes water there is little room left to take enough of the nourishing breastmilk that is necessary for the infant to grow strong and healthy.

● Bath water is not clean! Even a handful of water swallowed during bathing can be extremely dangerous to an infant. Never allow anyone to give bathwater to your baby. It can result in diarrhoea or other serious illness.
CARD FOUR: EMPTY ONE BREAST BEFORE OFFERING THE SECOND

Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding: Counselling Cards
CARD FOUR: EMPTY ONE BREAST FIRST BEFORE OFFERING THE SECOND

Do not rush yourself or your baby when breastfeeding. Allow your baby to empty one breast first before offering the second so that he/she gets both the fore and hind milk. That way the baby will be getting all the water, food, and nutrients that your breastmilk has to offer.

Additional Points:

- The milk at the beginning of a feed - the fore milk - is lighter and helps to quench the baby's thirst. Toward the end of a feed the milk becomes richer and heavier. It helps satisfy the baby's hunger. The milk in both breasts contains both water and food for the baby.

- Give your baby the time he/she needs to feed. Try not to interrupt or stop the baby from nursing to do something else when he/she settles down to breastfeed. You will know when the baby has finished with the breast because he/she will come off by himself and the breast will feel light. This way the baby is more likely to get to the rich and satisfying hind milk that comes toward the end of a feed.

- When babies get both the fore and hind milk they grow better and are more easily satisfied. You will be able to tell because they will be nice and plumpy with folds around the neck.
CARD FIVE: PERCEPTION OF NOT ENOUGH MILK

Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding: Counselling Cards
CARD FIVE: PERCEPTION OF NOT ENOUGH MILK

The breast is like God's well. The more the baby suckles the more breastmilk there will be. You will have enough milk as long as the baby is allowed to suckle frequently whenever he/she wants.

Additional Points:

- Do not worry about not having enough milk. The more the baby suckles the more milk there will be. Frequent feedings keep up a mother's milk supply.

- At around three months of age, a baby is likely to grow very quickly (experience a growth spurt). He/she may cry more or want to feed more often. This is normal and temporary. Feeding more often will increase the mother's milk supply to keep up with the infant's needs. Do not give other things to drink or eat. Continue to give only breastmilk.

- Make sure that the baby is attached well at the breast. The baby's whole body needs to be held close to the mother, stomach to stomach. The baby should not have to turn or bend his head to suckle. The baby's mouth should cover the mother's entire nipple and as much of the dark part of the breast as possible. This will make breastfeeding easier for both mother and baby.
CARD SIX: INTRODUCTION OF COMPLEMENTARY FOODS

Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding: Counselling Cards
CARD SIX: INTRODUCTION OF COMPLEMENTARY FOODS

Beginning at about six months of age, your baby needs to start taking other foods in addition to breastmilk. This will ensure that he/she continues to grow big, strong and healthy.

Additional Points:

- At about six months of age, your infant needs to begin taking soft and mushy foods. Food should be offered at least three times a day in addition to breastmilk. This will help the child to begin learning how to eat and ensure that he/she is getting all the nourishment needed to continue to grow strong and healthy.

- By the time the child is nine months old, he/she is ready to take food four times a day including food from the family pot. Continue to breastfeed as often as the child wants. When the child reaches twelve months of age, he/she is ready to take food five times a day in addition to breastmilk. This should include three meals and two snacks each day.

- In addition to giving other foods, remember it is important to continue breastfeeding your child through at least two years of age.
CARD SEVEN: GOOD FOODS FOR CHILDREN

Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding: Counselling Cards
CARD SEVEN: GOOD FOODS FOR CHILDREN

Make sure to prepare and offer a variety of foods that are easy for the child to take and swallow. Little by little the child will “learn” to eat the food that you offer him/her.

Additional Points:

- Make sure that foods are well cooked, mashed or ground so that they are smooth and mushy and easy for the infant to swallow.

- It may not always be convenient to prepare a separate dish for the child. When preparing the child’s portion separate it from the family pot before adding pepper. Pepper may be too hot for the child especially in the beginning when he/she is learning to eat.

- Add to the child's portion one or more of the following foods to make it more nutritious: fish powder, groundnut paste, soya milk or flour, shea butter, red palm or other vegetable oil, cooked and mashed bambara beans or cowpeas are all good.

- In addition to stews and soups with vegetables, give the child some fruits in season every day. Mangoes, pawpaw and oranges are all very good. Wash and peel, mash or squeeze the fruits so that they can be easily swallowed. Cooked and mashed vegetables such as pumpkin are also very good for children.

- As the child grows and learns to eat, be sure to give different types of foods every day to ensure that your child is getting all the essential nutrients for good health and development.
CARD EIGHT: TIPS FOR FEEDING YOUR CHILD

Breastfeeding & Infant Feeding: Counselling Cards
CARD EIGHT: TIPS FOR FEEDING YOUR CHILD

Help your child to eat. It may seem to take more time, but it will ensure that the child continues to grow big and strong. A well fed and healthy baby is a joy for everyone.

Additional Points:

- Serve your child in a separate bowl and help him/her to eat. The child will need assistance while eating until he/she is about two years old, to ensure that he/she is getting enough food.

- Always wash your hands and the hands of your child with soap and water. Don't forget to always use clean utensils and bowls or dishes to avoid introducing dirt and germs that might cause diarrhea and other infections.

- Never use a feeding bottle to give food or water to a child. They are too hard to keep clean and can cause diarrhoea. Use a small cup or bowl instead.

- Coax your child to eat. Never force feed. Sing songs, use games or tell stories to make feeding enjoyable. Encourage everyone who feeds the child to do the same.