



World Breastfeeding Week 1-7 August

Introduction:

World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is an annual celebration which is being held every year from 1 to 7 August in more than 120 countries. The idea of a day's celebration was later turned into a week. Breastfeeding is a 'team' process: mother and babies form the core of the team, with family, friends, and others serving as team members, coaches, cheerleaders, and fans. Mothers have goals for breastfeeding and need the help and support of the whole team to achieve those goals. As with a sports game, there can be small successes and setbacks through the course of a family's breastfeeding experience, though striving all the time to win.

The 2015 World Breastfeeding Week theme, **"Breastfeeding and work: let's make it work!"** celebrates the team effort needed to make breastfeeding easier.

Why Breastfeed?

Breastfeeding is the best way to give newborns the nutrients they need. Breast milk is highly nutritious with easy-to-digest proteins and natural immunities that protect babies against diseases and infection. Colostrum, the milk that mothers produce in the first days after birth, is not only dense in nutrients, but is also rich in antibodies that protect babies from bacteria and viruses that cause infection.

While the short-term benefits of breastfeeding have been well-established, some studies also show long-term benefits, and research in this area is ongoing. Although we still have much to learn about the long-term effects of breastfeeding, there is good evidence that people who were breastfed perform better on intelligence tests and that breastfeeding offers some protection against breast and ovarian cancer in mothers. There is also some evidence that breastfeeding may reduce the likelihood of developing type-2 diabetes; lead to lower blood pressure and cholesterol; and reduce the risk of being overweight or obese by 12%.

Does infant formula have the same impact?

The answer is **No**.

Infant formula does not have the antibodies that breast milk does, and therefore does not provide the same protection against common childhood diseases. For those who do not have access to safe drinking water, formula is also linked to waterborne illness. Unlike breast milk, which is free, available on demand, and nutritious, formula can lead to malnutrition as food-insecure families often spread out rations so that supplies last longer.

Objectives:

- ✂ To draw attention to the importance of peer support in helping mothers to establish and sustain breastfeeding.
- ✂ To inform people of the highly effective benefits of peer counseling, and unite efforts to expand peer counseling programs.
- ✂ To encourage breastfeeding supporters, regardless of their educational background, to step forward and be trained to support mothers and babies.
- ✂ To identify local community support contacts for breastfeeding mothers to whom women can go for help and support after giving birth.
- ✂ To call on governments and maternity facilities globally to actively implement the Ten Steps of breastfeeding, especially Step 10, so as to improve duration and rates of exclusive breastfeeding.

Objectives of WABA World Breastfeeding Week 2015

- 1 Galvanise** multi-dimensional support from all sectors to enable women everywhere to work and breastfeed.
- 2 Promote** actions by employers to become Family/Parent/Baby and Mother-Friendly, and to actively facilitate and support employed women to continue breastfeeding.
- 3 Inform** people about the latest in global Maternity Protection entitlements, and raise awareness of the need to strengthen related national legislation and implementation.
- 4 Strengthen**, facilitate and showcase supportive practices that enable women working in the informal sector to breastfeed.
- 5 Engage** with target groups e.g. with Trade Unions, Workers Rights Organisations, Women's groups and Youth groups, to protect the breastfeeding rights of women in the workplace.

ELEMENTS OF SUPPORT

Whether you are claiming your right to breastfeed, or campaigning to support women to work and breastfeed, there are three necessary factors that determine success: **TIME, SPACE and SUPPORT**. All three factors are needed for women in any kind of work setting.

TIME

1. Six months paid maternity leave post-natally to support exclusive breastfeeding. And, adequate paid leave prenatally. Where leave is shorter, women need means to extend their leave period so that they can be with their babies, combining fully paid, unpaid or some other form of leave.
2. Additional paid leave for mothers of premature or other vulnerable infants who may need extra time for special care, and to express and provide life-saving human milk for their babies.
3. One or more paid breastfeeding breaks or a daily reduction of hours of work to breastfeed her child.
4. Flexible work hours to breastfeed or to express breastmilk such as part-time work schedules, longer lunch and other breaks, job sharing or any such alternatives.

SPACE/ PROXIMITY

1. Infant and child-care at or near the workplace, and transportation for mothers to be with their babies. For rural worksites and seasonal work, women could use mobile child-care units or shared child-care and wet nursing arrangements according to accepted cultural practices.
2. Private facilities for expressing and storing breastmilk. It can be a breastfeeding room, a corner or any safe space at or near the worksite.
3. A clean work environment safe from hazardous waste and chemicals.

SUPPORT

1. Information about national maternity laws and benefits – as well as maternity provisions provided at their workplace or sector-wide – which may be better than national laws and practices.
2. Support from employers, management, superiors and co-workers in terms of positive attitudes towards pregnancy, motherhood and breastfeeding in public.
3. Information about women's health during pregnancy and lactation in order to be better able to combine employment with breastfeeding and child care needs.
4. Support from worker's or trade unions either from their own work sector or the larger national unions.
5. Job security and non-discrimination on the grounds of maternity and breastfeeding.

Reference Links:

-  <http://www.ilca.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3306>
-  http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Breastfeeding_Week
-  <http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/>
-  <http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/Communities/BreastfeedingPromotion/WorldBreastfeedingWeek/tabid/207/Default.aspx>
-  <https://internationalmedicalcorps.org/sslpage.aspx?pid=2113#.U99OFOOSzfi>

For any enquiry or assistance please contact: wellness@medicaretpa.co.in

Disclaimer: No information contained here should be relied on in making health decisions. Always check with your doctor or other health care provider.