

Infant Feeding Practices: Barriers and Benefits of Breastfeeding Practices among Mothers in a Village in North Karnataka

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Abstract

Introduction: Giving pre lacteal feeds is a common cultural practice in many countries around the world.

Though breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for the infants, its importance is ignored in various ways. Therefore, an attempt was made to determine the breast feeding practices among mothers of rural north Karnataka.

Method: A cross-sectional study was conducted among mothers of Shivanagi village who had at least one child in the age group of 6 months to one year. Information regarding knowledge, attitude and practices

related to breastfeeding practices was collected in a pre-tested, semi-structured questionnaire by interview

technique.

Results: Of the 167 mothers, prelacteal feeds were given by 65.9% of them whereas colostrum was given

by only 43.1%. Mother and infant illnesses and ignorance (37.1%, 37.1% and 317% respectively), followed

by lack of privacy (25.1%) were mentioned as the major barriers faced for breast feeding.

Conclusion: IEC (Information, education and communication) activities in this regard can play a major role in putting an end to widespread misconceptions for withholding colostrum and giving pre lacteal feeds.

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