

COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING PRACTICES AND THE IMPACT ON GROWTH INDICATORS IN BABIES OF SECOND HALF OF INFANCY

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Background: Improper feeding practices have a lasting impact on the development and health of infants. Complementary feeding indicators have not reached the expected levels in Sri Lanka and its improvement is partly constrained by lack of data.

Objective: To ascertain the current complementary feeding practices and its impact on growth indicators among 6-12 months old infants.

Methods: Data on complementary feeding practices were obtained through an interviewer-administered questionnaire from mothers (n=450) attending well-baby clinics in randomly selected Public Health Midwifery areas in Galle district.

Results: Until 6 months of age exclusive breast feeding rate was 48.5% whereas, 41.0% of the babies were given water before six months. Rice *canjee*, rice paste, dhal, sprat, fish, carrot, pumpkin and eggs were the food of choice for complementary feeding. In the preparation of complementary foods sugar and salt were added in 42.7% and 58.1% of subjects respectively and oil in 84.2%. Over 70.0% mothers reported feeding with dairy products while 41.0% with infant cereal products, 40% chocolates, 31% plain tea, 22% with ice cream and 7% Tipi Tip. Bottle feeding rate was 61.5% and iron or vitamin supplement rate was 16.0%. The age specific body weight and height was not achieved by 32.7% and 30.5% of infants respectively. Reaching of the motor

milestones age specifically in the study group was also studied. Common illnesses one month prior to the interview were diarrhea (10%), vomiting (6.5%), allergies (4.9%), skin rashes (10.5%) and mouth rashes (3.3%) respectively. Infants with severe infective diseases, congenital anomalies and chronic diseases were excluded from the study at the subject recruitment in order to avoid confounders. Satisfactory knowledge on basic nutrients was seen among 30.8% of mothers and moderate in 36.0%.

Conclusion: Complementary feeding indices of the study group were not satisfactory. The maternal and child health care personnel need to review causative factors for malpractices in complementary feeding.

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DEVELOPMENT OF UNSWEETENED NON FAT SET YOGHURT

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Background: Non communicable disease incidences are on the rise globally and also in Sri Lanka. Coronary heart diseases [CHD], cerebrovascular diseases [CeVD], hypertension and diabetes mellitus are becoming a severe burden to the country over the past decade. Increased intake of fat and sugar is partly attributable to overweight and obesity which are