

INAPPROPRIATE FREQUENCY OF BREASTFEEDING

(411i)

PARTICIPANT TYPE.....INFANTS
HIGH RISK.....NO

RISK DESCRIPTION:

Routinely limiting the frequency of nursing of the exclusively breastfed infant when breast milk is the sole source of nutrients.

Examples:

- Scheduled feedings instead of demand feedings
- Less than 8 feedings in 24 hours if less than 2 months of age
- Less than 6 feedings in 24 hours if between 2 and 6 months of age

ASK ABOUT:

- Mother's beliefs and attitudes toward infant feeding schedules
- Cultural, medical, family, religious, or other factors affecting usual breastfeeding pattern
- Mother's knowledge of appropriate feeding management skills

NUTRITION COUNSELING/EDUCATION TOPICS:

- Frequent breastfeeding is critical to establishing and maintaining an adequate milk supply.
- Inadequate frequency of breastfeeding may lead to lactation failure for the mother and dehydration, poor weight gain, diarrhea, vomiting, illness and malnourishment for the infant.
- Emphasize early feeding and hunger cues (rooting, sucking on lips or hands, smacking lips, mouth and tongue movements, and hand-to-mouth movements).
 - Breastfeed when an infant shows early signs of hunger.
 - Infants who are not fed until they show late signs of hunger (e.g., crying) may not nurse as well as those fed earlier.
- Some infants are sleepy and must be awakened to nurse. This is frequently the case with newborns and premature infants.
- Address any breastfeeding problems that may be interfering with feeding (sore nipples, cracking nipples, engorgement, etc.).

POSSIBLE REFERRALS:

- If infant weight gain is below normal or mother reports breastfeeding problems that are interfering with feeding frequency (sore nipples, cracking nipples, engorgement, etc.), refer to primary care provider for follow-up and/or for referral to a lactation consultant.
- If appropriate, provide access to an electric based on WIC policies to help the mother increase her milk supply.
- If she could benefit from peer support, refer her to the peer counseling program or other community-based breastfeeding support program.