

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6948
ANSWERED ON:18.05.2012
COLOSTRUM TO NEWBORN
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether giving colostrum to newborns is not commonly practised and also most of the mothers do not feed water to their infants before six months in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to launch a campaign to create awareness among mothers in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY)

(a) & (b): As per the data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) -3 (2005-06), 55% new-borns are breastfed within 24 hours of birth. All these children receive the 'Colostrum' or 'first breast milk' when breastfeeding is initiated.

Exclusive breastfeeding refers to giving only breast milk and nothing else, (not even water) and is the recommended practice for the first six months after birth. As per NFHS 3, 46.4 % infants less than six months were exclusively breastfed, while 22% infants received water in addition to breast milk.

(c) Under the Reproductive and Child Health Programme, following steps are being carried.

Nutrition Education through VHNDs (Village Health and Nutrition Days) and Anganwadi centres to increase the awareness and bring about desired changes in infant feeding practices including the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding.

Early initiation of breastfeeding by skilled service providers at health facilities where births take place.

The states are training the Medical Officers, Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM), Anganwadi workers (AWWs) Staff Nurses, etc in Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices so that they can promote colostrum feeding, exclusive breastfeeding for first six months, introduction of complementary food after 6 months, and consumption of iron rich food.

Training of ASHAs in Home Based New-born Care where ASHA visits each new born in first 42 days of life. They promote optimal infant feeding practices also during home visits

Awareness about exclusive breastfeeding and infant feeding practices through the Mass media and Breastfeeding campaigns conducted during the Breastfeeding week from 1st-7th August each year.