

How to ensure timely initiation of complementary feeding



Ministry of Women & Child Development
Government of India, 2018

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Role play

How can we support families to initiate complementary feeding?



Display the card.

We are familiar with the concept of timely initiation of complementary feeding, which begins when an infant completes 6 months of age.

Tell the participants that we will have a small role play to demonstrate how to persuade families to start complementary feeding on time.

Use the points given on the right to facilitate the role play. Let the role play go on for at least 10 minutes and make sure that everyone pays attention.



Ask the following questions after role play and discuss:

1. What did you understand from the role play?
2. What can be improved in the role play?



If time permits, other participants can be invited to repeat the role play to show how the counseling could be done better.

During discussion do not draw conclusions. Tell the participants that we will discuss this in detail in next slides.

Directions for role play:

1. Three participants should volunteer to play the following roles:
 - Mother of a 6 month old infant
 - Grandmother of the infant (mother-in-law)
 - ASHA or AWW
2. ASHA or AWW visit the home of the 6 month old infant and have a conversation with the mother and grandmother about feeding the infant. The objective is to start complementary feeding to the infant.
3. ASHA/AWW can use a bowl and spoon during the conversation to explain the correct method and quantity of administering complementary feeding.
4. Duration of role play should be about 10 minutes.
5. Participants should be attentive during the conversation and take down important notes. At the end of the role-play, initiate a discussion on what was right and/or wrong in the role play.



Role play

How can we support families to initiate complementary feeding?





What do we know about complementary feeding?



Display the card.

Ask the participants to read each point one by one. Seek answers from different participants. After listening to 2-3 answers of each of these questions use the points given on right side to provide correct answers. Praise participants for right answers but do not discourage if the answers were incorrect, rather explain the situation and guide them towards correct answer. Emphasize on new or untrained participants.

Q1. What is the right age to initiate complementary feeding?

A1. On completion of 6 months.

Q2. What is the harm in initiating complementary feeding before 6 months?

A2. Anything other than exclusive breast feeding can cause diarrhea.

Q3. What will happen if complementary feeding is not initiated immediately after the infant reaches 6 months of age?

A3. Exclusive breast feeding cannot provide adequate nutrition to an infant after 6 months. Complementary feeding, along with breast feeding, is required to ensure adequate growth in height and weight and mental development of the infant. An infant of this age requires complementary feeding to acquire strength to play, and fight against infections too.

Q4. What diet should be given to the infant while initiating complementary feeding?

A4. After 6 months, initiate complementary feeding with various foods available at home. Try to feed what the infants like to eat. Please make sure that the feed is soft, well cooked and mashed so that the infant can swallow without chewing.

Q5. Should we give thin soup of pulses (dal ka pani) or rice starch (chawal ka maadh) at the initial stage?

A5. No liquid should be given to the infant other than mother's milk. Liquids will fill her stomach but will not give required nutrition.



What do we know about complementary feeding?



1. What is the right age to initiate complementary feeding?
2. What is the harm in initiating complementary feeding before 6 months?
3. What will happen if complementary feeding is not initiated immediately after the infant reaches 6 months of age?
4. What diet should be given to the infant while initiating complementary feeding?
5. Should we give soup of pulses (dal ka pani) or rice starch (chawal ka maadh) at the initial stage?





How can we help the family to ensure that complementary feeding to the child is initiated at the right age?



Display the card.

Ask the participants to read the questions one by one. Ask the participants to express their views. Let there be a discussion.

Use the points on the right to facilitate the discussion.



Ask the participants:

- Why is it important to make home visits when the infant is of 6 months? Encourage participants to respond.

Use the points below to answer the question:

- Most families do not know the correct method of complementary feeding. They are not aware how much food should be given to an infant of 6 months. Some families start complementary feeding on time, but the quantity of food is not enough.
- During home visit and by talking to family members, ASHA and AWW can find out which food items are being given to the infant and what problems are being faced by the family in administering complementary feeding? If required, they can advise and support the family.

Action points for ASHA and AWW to ensure that a family begins adequate complementary feeding to the infant at the right age:

AWW and ASHA should start counseling the family from the beginning of fifth or sixth month of the infant –

- Find out what is already being fed apart from breast milk and encourage exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months.
- Explain to the family that the child should be initiated complementary feeding along with breast milk after six months, and that such food should be cooked at home.
- Find out if there is a tradition similar to Annaprashan or Munh-jhoothi in the family.

Counseling the family after the infant has reached the age of 6 months:

- Find out if complementary feeding has been started, and what is being given?
- Find out if the infant is being fed from a separate bowl or plate and spoon?
- Demonstrate how the food cooked at home can be prepared to feed the infant, and how the infant can be fed out of a separate bowl.
- Find out what problems are being faced by families in ensuring complementary feeding.

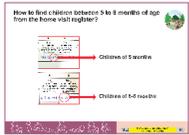


How can we help the family to ensure that complementary feeding to the child is initiated at the right age?



1. From what age should we talk to the infant's family to start complementary feeding? Should complementary feeding begin when the infant completes 6 months?
2. How can we convince the family that the infant can take complementary feeding once she is 6 months old?
3. What should we do if we find that family has started complementary feeding before the infant has reached the age of 6 months?





How to find children between 5 to 8 months of age from the home visit register?



Display the card.

Ask the participant:

So far we have discussed that in order to support a family to initiate complementary feeding at right time we have to start home visits as soon as an infant completes 5 months and make frequent visits till the infant completes 8 months.

So, how will you know which children are between 5 to 8 months of age? Do you know how to find children between 5 to 8 months of age from the home visit register?



Ask everyone to take out home visit register. Use the points on the right to explain how to find children between 5 to 8 months of age. Take the help of participants who know about it, and make sure that everyone understands how to find children of 5 to 8 months of age from the home visit register.

To find children of 5 months:

- Take a look at column 8, which shows information of 1-5 month-old children. You must have already written the age of the infant as per the calendar month in the column.
- Now look at the column where current month is mentioned. These are children who have completed 5 months.

Example: Suppose the current month is July. All children for whom the months mentioned in Col 8 are 'March-July' have currently completed 5 months.

To find children of 6 to 8 months:

- Take a look at the calendar month mentioned in column 9 of the home visit register. If the current month is written in this column then the infant is between 6-8 months of age.



How to find children between 5 to 8 months of age from the home visit register?



8	9	
शिशु 1-5 माह तक (कितने भी सम्पर्क पर्याप्त हैं-हो सके तो दो से तीन बार)	शिशु 6-8 माह तक (हर माह 1 गृहभ्रमण, यदि आवश्यक हो तो अधिक बार)	9-11 (1-2)
NOV to	MAR	

Children of 5 months

8	9	
शिशु 1-5 माह तक (कितने भी सम्पर्क पर्याप्त हैं-हो सके तो दो से तीन बार)	शिशु 6-8 माह तक (हर माह 1 गृहभ्रमण, यदि आवश्यक हो तो अधिक बार)	
OCT to FEB	MARCH	

Children of 6-8 months





How much effort do we need to put in, to ensure timely complementary feeding?



Display the card.

Ask the participants to read the questions one by one. Let there be discussion on each point. Use the points on the right to guide the discussion.

At the end of the discussion, emphasize:

It is important to make at least one home visit per month. However some families will require more than one visit to accomplish timely initiation of complementary feeding to the infant.

- Each month, we have at least 2 births in an AWC area, thus there will be 2 children each month who will complete 5 months.
- Similarly every month, there will be 5-6 children between the age of 6-8 months. .
- If we do one home visit per month to the households of these infants, a total of 8 home visits is required every month to cover all these children.
- Time required during each home visit:
 - ◆ For children who have not yet started complementary feeding or are not feeding well, we will need to provide more time during our visit. During the visit we will demonstrate preparation of food and way of feeding. The time required would be around 20 minutes per visit.
 - ◆ Once the family has understood how to feed the child, the time required would be around 5 minutes per visit. Same shall apply for families who already know how to and how much to feed the infant.



How much effort do we need to put in, to ensure timely complementary feeding?



- How many 5 month-old children do we have at each AWC?
- How many 6-8 month-old children do we have at each AWC?
- How much time should each home visit take?





Initiation of complementary feeding: Summary



Display the card.

Explain that we will now summarize what we have learnt today about initiation of complementary feeding.



Ask the participants to read the points one by one. Explain wherever necessary.



5 Minute

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How to ensure timely initiation of complementary feeding

6F

Initiation of complementary feeding: Summary



When to start?

Initiate complementary feeding as soon as the infant completes 6 months. Until then continue with exclusive breastfeeding.

What types of food should be given in the beginning?

- Start with semi-solid mixture of rice and pulses or khichdi.
- Mix available vegetables, curd, ghee, oil etc. which are available at home. Households that are non-vegetarian may continue to feed food items that are good sources of high quality protein, Vitamin A and D. Also the food should be well cooked, soft and mashed.
- Don't give thin soup of pulses (dal ka pani) or rice starch (chawal ka maadh).
- Don't give liquids like tea, coffee etc.

How to give complementary feed?

- Feed in a separate bowl with the help of a spoon.
- The food should be properly mashed. Initially, complementary food should be soft and easy to swallow.
- Wash your hands with soap before preparing food and feeding the infant.

Who should feed?

Any member of the family who can take adequate care and give sufficient time.





Action points

1. Home visits to children of 5 months



Display the card.

Ask the participants to read all the points one by one. Explain each point in brief with the help of points given on the right side.

We will identify and visit children of 5 months from home visit register.

At least one visit to the family of the infant who has completed 5 months.

Find out from the family:

- What else is being given to the child other than breast milk?
- When are they planning to initiate complementary feeding?
- If needed, we will explain about exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding.
- First we need to meet the family and find out what is being fed to the infant.
- If the infant is currently on exclusive breastfeeding and the family plans to introduce complementary feeding from the next month, then we will appreciate and tell them that they are on the right track.
- If they are not doing it right, then we will guide them.
- If the family is feeding water or animal milk to the infant, even if it is in very small quantity, we will urge them to stop it altogether.
- If the infant is being fed through a bottle with a nipple, then we will persuade the family to stop immediately as this practice can prove fatal for the infant.
- If the family has started the practice of complementary feeding, then we will advise them on the correct way to provide complementary foods.

We will record the date of visit in the home visit planner register:

- Mention problems, if any, in brief, otherwise just mention the date of home visit.
- We will find out the date when child would complete six months, and inform the family that we will visit them again on that day.



Action points



1. Home visits to children of 5 months

We will identify children of 5 months from the home visit register and make home visits to their household.

We will find out from the family:

- **What else is being given to the child other than breast milk?**
- **When are they planning to initiate complementary feeding?**

If needed, we will explain about exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding.

We will record the date of home visit in the home visit planner register.





Action points

2. Home visits to children 6 to 8 months old



Display the card.

Ask the participants to read all the points one by one.

Explain each point in brief with the help of points given on the right side.

Identify and visit children of 6 to 8 months from home visit register:

- We will make a home visit and meet the family at least once as soon as the infant completes 6 months.
- We will visit, at least once a month till the time complementary feeding is not established.
- We will visit the family frequently if there is problem in complementary feeding.

We will find out from the family about how much the child is being fed in a day? What types of foods is she being given? Who is feeding the child?

We will be present at the time of feeding, and will counsel as required.

We will demonstrate how to prepare home cooked semi-solid food and how to feed the infant.

- Mothers and families will require additional support during the initial days of complementary feeding, which we will have to provide. Initially, if the family members do not agree that an infant at this age can take complementary feed, we will demonstrate by mashing home cooked food and feeding the infant using a separate bowl; we will also ask members of the family to feed the child themselves in front of us. Once the infant and her family become comfortable with complementary feeding then there will be little need for support.
- Complementary feeding and continued breastfeeding must be ensured. Breastfeeding up till 2 years of age is very beneficial for the child.

Record the date of home visit in the home visit planner:

- Mention the problems, if any, in brief, otherwise just mention the date of home visit.
- If there is a tradition to celebrate Annaprasan at the community level, then we will invite the children and their families for the occasion.



Action points



2. Home visits to children 6 to 8 months old

We will identify and visit children 6 to 8 months old, from the home visit planner

- **We will find out from the family about how much the child is being fed in a day?**
- **What types of foods is she being given? Who is feeding?**
- **We will be present at the time of feeding, and will counsel as required.**
- **We will demonstrate how to prepare home cooked semi-solid food and how to feed the infant.**

We will record the date of home visit in the home visit planner register.



- 1 *Why this Monthly Meeting ?*
- 2 *Making or updating Home Visit Planner & Initiating Home Visits*
- 3 *Planning and Organizing Community Based Events at AWC*
- 4 *Observing Breastfeeding in Newborn Babies - Why and How*
- 5 *Identification and Care of a Weak Newborn baby*
- 6 *Complementary Feeding: Diet Diversity*
- 7 *Preventing Anemia in Women*
- 8 *Assessment of Growth in Children*
- 9 *Ensuring that Complementary Feeding improves over time*
- 10 *Ensuring Exclusive Breastfeeding*
- 11 *Care of the Weak Newborn Baby - How many weak babies are we missing?*
- 12 **How to ensure timely initiation of Complementary Feeding**
- 13 *Identifying and preventing Severe Acute Malnutrition*
- 14 *Feeding During Illness*
- 15 *Supporting mothers with issues in Breastfeeding*
- 16 *How to take care of weak newborn with the help of Kangaroo Mother Care*
- 17 *Identification & Referral of Sick Newborn*
- 18 *Preventing illnesses to avert Malnutrition and Death*
- 19 *Prevention of Anemia in girls and adolescents*
- 20 *Birth Preparedness- For Institutional and Home Delivery*
- 21 *Preparation During Pregnancy: For NewBorn Care & Family Planning*

