

Relactation Quick Reference Guide

- Explain to parent why it would help the infant to breastfeed exclusively, and what is needed to increase the human milk supply. Explain that it takes patience and perseverance.
- Build confidence. Help parent feel that enough human milk can be produced for the child. Try to see and talk to parent often every day if possible.
- Make sure that the lactating parent has enough to eat and drink.
- Encourage parent to rest more, and to try to relax when breastfeeding.
- Explain that the child should be kept near, to give the baby plenty of skin-to-skin contact and to provide the majority of the baby's care. Grandparents and other family members can help if they take over other responsibilities, but they should not care for the child at this time.
- Explain that the most important thing is to let the infant suckle more, at least 8 to 10 times in 24 hours, more if baby is willing. Sometimes it is easiest to get an infant to suckle when he or she is sleepy.

Allow suckling longer than before at each breast

Allow suckling whenever baby is interested

Keep baby with relactating parent and breastfeed at night

Offer skin to skin (baby on chest of lactating parent) feedings every 2 hours

- Discuss how to give other milk feeds, while waiting for breastmilk to flow, and how to reduce the breastmilk substitute as MOM (mom's own milk) increases.
- Show how to give the other feeds from a cup; pacifier use should be discontinued.
- If the infant refused to suckle when no much milk is produced, help to find a way to give the child milk while suckling. For example, with a supplementer, a dropper or syringe.
- For the first few days, the full amount of artificial feed appropriate for the child's weight, or the same amount that had been given prior to establishment of relactation, should be given.
- As soon as breastmilk begins to flow, the amount of supplement can reduce - by about 50 ml every few days.
- Check the child's weight gain and urine output, to make sure that she/he is getting enough milk. If he or she is not getting enough, do not reduce the artificial feed for a few days. If necessary, increase the amount of artificial milk for a day or two.

If a child is still breastfeeding sometimes, the breast milk supply increases in a few days. If a child has stopped breastfeeding, it may take one to two weeks or more before much breastmilk comes.

Adapted from: Relactation: review of experience and recommendations for practice WHO, 1998
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