



References

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Important Notice

The World Health Organization (WHO)\* has recommended that pregnant women and new mothers be informed of the benefits and superiority of breast-feeding, in particular, the fact that it provides the best nutrition and protection from illness for babies. Mothers should be given guidance on the preparation for and maintenance of lactation, with special emphasis on the importance of the well-balanced diet both during pregnancy and after delivery. Unnecessary introduction of partial bottle feeding or other foods and drinks should be discouraged since it will have a negative effect on breast-feeding. Similarly mothers should be warned of the difficulty of reversing a decision not to breastfeed. Before advising a mother to use an infant formula, she should be advised of the social and financial implications of her decision. For example, if a baby is exclusively bottle-fed, more than one can (500g) per week will be needed, so the family circumstances and cost should be kept in mind. Mother should be reminded that breast milk is not only the best but also the most economical food for babies. If a decision to use infant formula is taken, it is important to give instruction on correct preparation methods, emphasizing that unboiled water, unsterilized bottles or incorrect dilution can lead to illness. \*See: International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, adopted by the World Health Assembly in Resolution WHA 34.22, May 1981.

Mothers should be explained the following advantages & nutritional superiority of breastfeeding:

(i) Immediately after delivery, breast milk is yellowish and sticky. This milk is called colostrum, which is secreted during the first week of delivery. Colostrum is more nutritious than mature milk because it contains more protein, more anti-infective properties which are of great importance for the infant's defence against dangerous neonatal infections. It also contains higher levels of, Vitamin 'A', (ii) Breast milk: a. is, a complete and balanced food and provides all the nutrients needed by the infant (for the first six months of life) b. has anti-infective properties that protect the infants from infection in the early months c. is always available d. needs no utensils or water (which might, carry germs) or fuel for its preparation (iii) Breastfeeding is much cheaper than feeding infant milk substitutes as the cost of the extra food needed by the mother is negligible compared to the cost of feeding infant milk substitutes, (iv) Mothers who breast-feed usually have longer periods of infertility after child birth than non-lactators.

Details of management of breastfeeding, as under:

(i) Breast-feeding- a. Immediately after delivery enables the contraction of the womb and helps the mother to regain her figure quickly; b. is successful when the infant suckles frequently and the mother wanting to breast-feed is confident in her ability to do so (ii) In order to promote and support breast-feeding the mother's natural desire to breast feed should always be encouraged by giving, where needed, practical advice and making sure that she has the support of her relatives. (iii) Adequate care for the breast and nipples should be taken during pregnancy. (iv) It is also necessary to put the infant to the breast as soon as possible after delivery. (v) Let the mother and the infant stay together after the delivery, the mother and her infant should be allowed to stay together (in hospital, this is called "rooming-in"); (vi) Give the infant colostrum as it is rich in many nutrients and anti-infective factors protecting the infants from infections during the few days of its birth; (vii) The practice of discarding colostrum and giving sugar water, honey water, butter or other concoctions instead of colostrum should be very strongly discouraged (viii) Let the infants suckle on demand; (ix) Every effort should be made to breast-feed the infants whenever they cry; (x) Mother should keep her body and clothes and that of the infant always neat and clean.

(i) Breastfeeding is the best form of nutrition for babies and provides many benefits to babies and mothers. It is important that, in preparation for and during breastfeeding, you eat a healthy, balanced diet. Combined breast and bottle-feeding in the first weeks of life may reduce the supply of your own breastmilk, and reversing the decision not to breastfeed is difficult.

(ii) Always consult your Healthcare Professional for advice about feeding your baby. The social and financial implications of using infant formula should be considered. Improper use of an infant formula or inappropriate foods or feeding methods may present a health hazard. If you use infant formula, you should follow manufacturer's instructions for use carefully - failure to follow the instructions may make your baby ill.



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**IMPORTANT NOTICE: MOTHER'S MILK IS BEST FOR YOUR BABY**

FOR THE USE OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS ONLY. Post-discharge booklet 1/11/2018

# WINNING JOURNEY CONTINUES AT HOME

## Premie Care at Home



SUPPORTING THE PREMIES  
**TOGETHER WE WIN**

## CARING FOR YOUR BABY

Being a mother of a preemie makes you a fighter and your baby, a winner.

As a fighter mom, you need a lot of patience, strength, care and love. You play a very important role in your baby's care and development. Your presence around your baby makes them a winner.

Preemies and their families experience an unfamiliar, highly technical and often overwhelming journey through the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). As the time to go home approaches, most parents question their ability to care for their baby without the support of NICU staff and technology. Supporting and involving parents in the discharge process gives them confidence in caring for their baby at home.<sup>1</sup>

## WHEN CAN YOU TAKE YOUR BABY HOME?

At discharge from the hospital, which usually occurs between 37 and 40 weeks of post-conceptual age, the baby should exhibit the following characteristics<sup>2</sup>:



An ability to raise the head when prone and to hold the head parallel with the body when tested for the head-lag response



An appropriate amount and pattern of weight gain according to a growth grid



An ability to cry with vigor when hungry



Neurologic responses appropriate for corrected age

**Although, the NICU can be a life-saving environment for our fighter, but a prolonged stay doesn't make NICU their home. Eventually, the baby must be home with their parents.<sup>1</sup>**

## PREP YOUR HOME

As fighter mom and dad, you must accomplish numerous psychological tasks before effective relationships and parenting patterns can evolve. These tasks include the following<sup>2</sup>:



1 Adjusting the home environment to accommodate the needs of your baby.



3 Alter the environmental temperature to optimize conditions for your baby.



2 Limit the number of visitors to minimize exposure of your baby to pathogens.



4 Learn about the ways wherein, your baby differs in terms of their special needs, growth patterns, care giving needs, and development expectations.

**Most importantly, as a fighter mom you shouldn't grieve about your baby's preterm birth. Your preemie is a born winner.**

## NUTRITION

Preemies have higher nutrient requirements as they have missed some or all of the third trimester of pregnancy, which is a period of nutrient deposition and rapid growth.<sup>3</sup>

Begin with:



Breastmilk as recommended by the doctor<sup>4</sup>

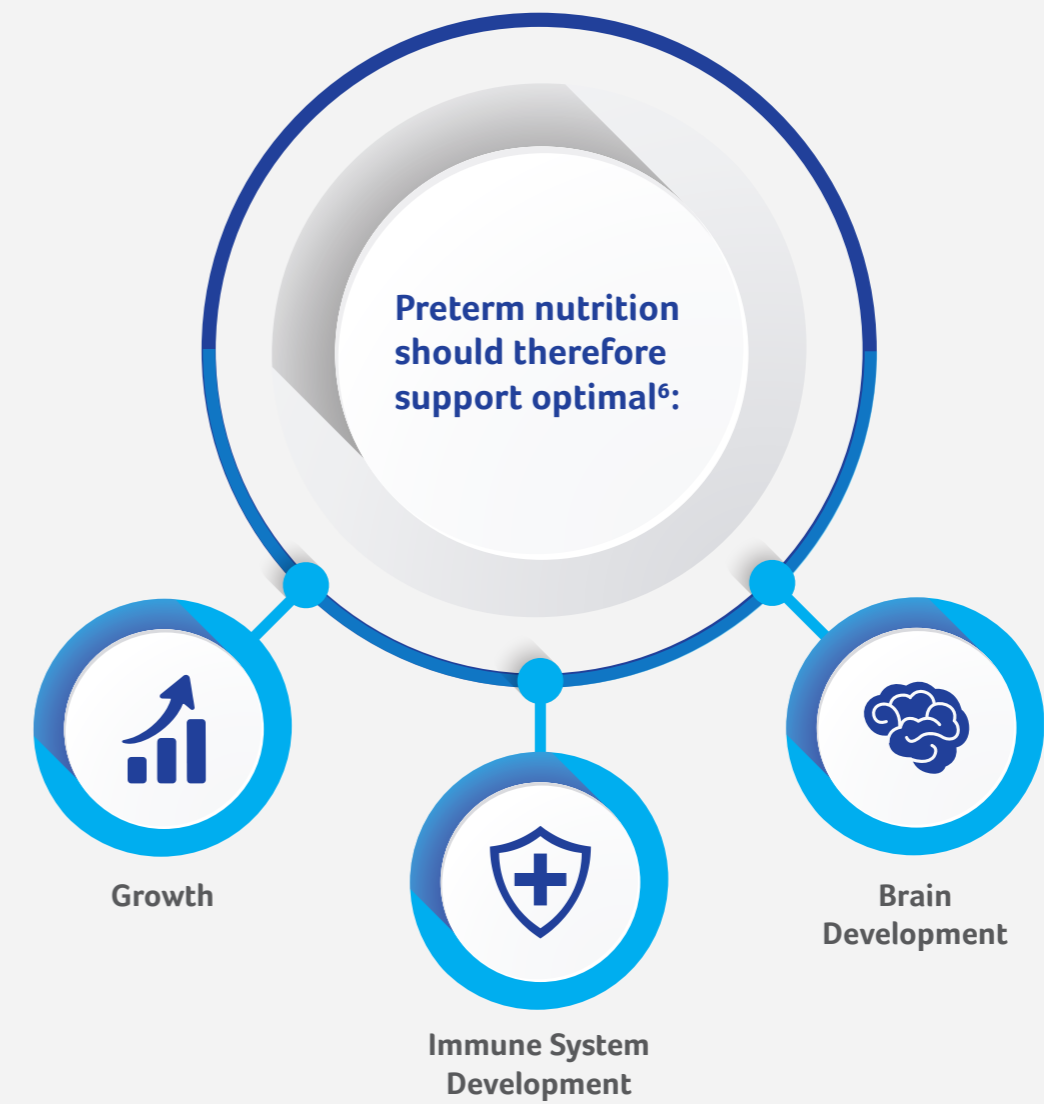
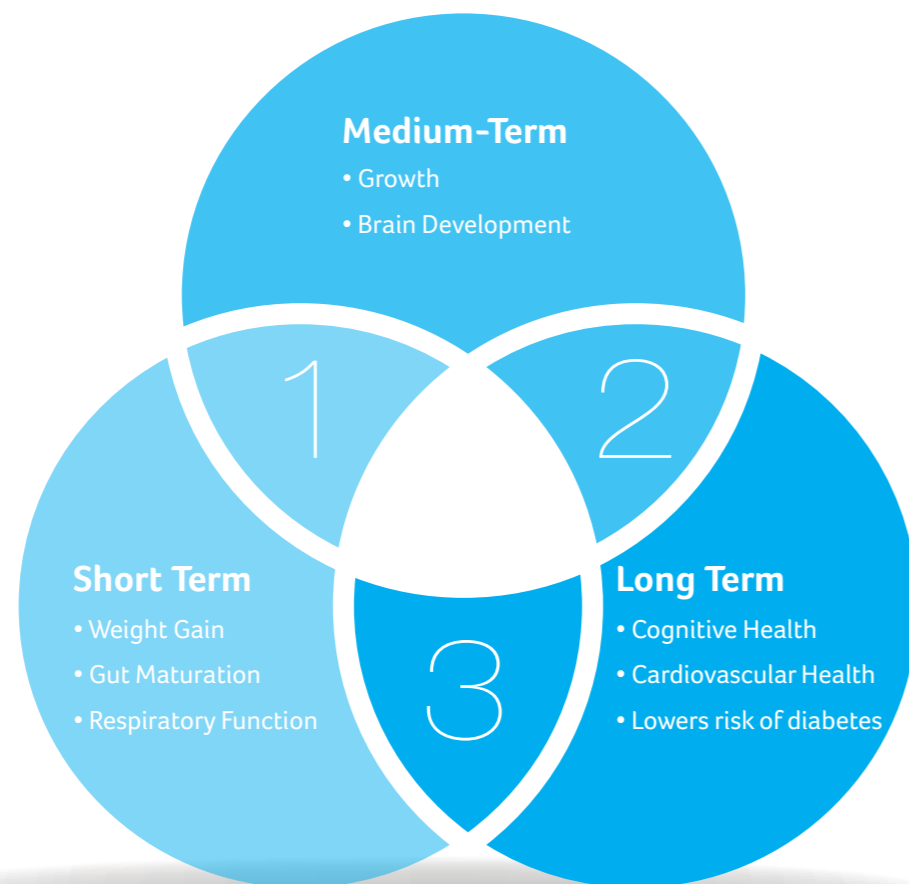


Formula for preemies as prescribed by the doctor<sup>4</sup>

Initiation of feedings, their volume and the rate of advance of feedings are related to birth weight, gestational age and how the infant has tolerated feeds to date.<sup>4</sup>

## IMPACT OF NUTRITION

Nutrition has important effects on short-term, medium-term and long-term outcomes<sup>5</sup>:



## RECOMMENDATIONS\*

- ✓ The first follow-up should be done within a week post-discharge.
- ✓ At corrected age of 4 months, parents can initiate complementary feeding as per doctor's advice.
- ✓ Optimal nutrition lowers the risk of adverse morbidities in adulthood. It plays a vital role in growth, metabolism and immunity of your baby.
- ✓ Optimal weight gain is the target for their development. But monitoring their growth velocity is essential, as rapid weight gain could also be associated with future cardiovascular risk.
- ✓ Your baby should be monitored preferably till adolescence. Regular post-discharge follow-up is advisable up to 2 years of age.



\*Adapted from: Kumar RK., Singhal A., et al. Optimizing Nutrition in Preterm Low Birth weight infants—Consensus Summary. Front Nutr. 2017 May 26;4:20.