

FEED SMART RIGHT FROM THE START

SYNOPSIS

- Introduction
 - Breast feeding – Infants survival
 - Eat today for tomorrow
 - Poshan maah
 - Eat rightly and stay healthy
 - Eating dinner at home
 - Conclusion
-

INTRODUCTION

In India, the National Nutrition Week is observed every year from September 1 to 7 to raise public awareness about nutrition and healthy eating habits. This week is observed to make people understand the importance of nutritional and adaptive eating habits so that they can maintain a healthy lifestyle. As nutrition plays an important role in an individual's life, it is necessary to have right amount of nutrition including proteins, vitamins, salt in their daily diet. This year the theme for the National Nutritional Week is **“FEED SMART RIGHT FROM THE START”**.

BREAST FEEDING – INFANTS SURVIVAL

Breast feeding is recognized as an important action for an infant's survival as soon as the baby is born. Colostrum which is the milk produced by the mother initially after the delivery, provides nutrients and act as an antibody. Breast feeding or skin to skin contact with the mother improves mother infant's bonding and keep the child warm and healthy. As we all know breast feeding alone can provide essential nutrients for the first six months of life, knowing about breast feeding is very much important.

EAT TODAY FOR TOMORROW

It is said that **“you are what you eat”**. Diet plays a significant role in deciding your health and well being. A healthy nutritious and well balanced diet enhances the quality of life while a poor diet will take you close to illness. The food items which you put on your plate today not only provides today's health but also helps in future. Starting from your child's first meal to last, whatever they consumes not only impact their today's health but also leaves a lasting impression for future.

Some of the ways to keep your child's health good are as follows:

1. Teach them young – Your child does not know the importance of nutritious foods. so it is the duty of the parents to teach their children about the importance of eating healthy food, dropping the unhealthy food items. Parents have to cook healthy meals and try to attract children using various recipes.

2. Think creatively, act accordingly – Basically children love bright colors. So we can make fruits and vegetables attractive by thinking creatively . We can cut fruits and vegetables into different shapes and sizes and fruits into attractive smoothies.
3. Make ways to stay healthy – Children love sweets, chocolates and eat often. Instead of stopping them from eating, we can try some healthier alternatives. You can bake cakes using wheat, then add jaggery, dates for sweetness. Replace ice-cream with frozen fruits and also some blended in fruits.
4. Manage the meal timings – In the modern era it not only become easier but also convenient to feed kids with some screen time like mobile, TV, laptops. Instead of running behind your kids with food in hand it is easy to manage their meal timings.
5. Become a role model – Usually children learn a lot from their elder’s action, so why not to make a difference first in yourself and thereby let kids gradually pickup healthier habits from you.

POSHAN MAAH

Health is a major concern worldwide. Women and children form an important pillar of the society and it is important to focus on their health and nutrition. Hence the prime minister scheme or programme named poshan maah was launched to improve nutritional outcomes for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers. It directs attention of the country towards the problem of mal nutrition. Every year the month of September is celebrated as POSHAN MAAH across the country. This month highlights the importance and role of right nutrition.

EAT RIGHTLY AND STAY HEALTHY

Nowadays, people follow a bad lifestyle by eating unhealthy food and staying unhealthy. All are busy in running to malls, restaurants, hotels almost all the time. It is so much easier to stop and get fast food. However we should stop and think is it really worth it, to not eat right food and exercise. Studies show that people who eat right food and exercise stay healthy and live longer. Nobody knows the feeling that a person gets when he eats healthy food and working out. It is a lifestyle that everyone should try to adopt and live by. It should make them feel good.

EATING DINNER AT HOME

Eating dinner at home can be a time of connecting everyone in the family. Keeping the closeness of family can be achieved by eating dinner at home. Having a good meal and a good conversation with your family members will help you feel good about yourself. It also make you think positively about your body and mind.

“it is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver”, these are the words of Mahatma Gandhiji. As he says if you have health nobody can stop you from achieving gold or silver.

CONCLUSION

Eating smart isn't difficult. It's never too late to start eating smart. Small gradual steps taken today can ensure bigger and positive changes for tomorrow. So make sure you are feeding your little ones smart right from the start. Involve your children in the process of cooking so that they know the efforts you put into make the food. Let them naturally pick up healthier habits from you. Always ensure you are the right role model for them from the very beginning.

FEED SMART RIGHT FROM THE START

Every infant and child has the right to good nutrition according to the "Convention on the Rights of the Child". It's important to give your child the best start in life. One way you can do that is by feeding your child smart, from the start. The most important thing the mothers used to worry about is how they can provide healthy life for their children. Therefore, the appropriate and healthy food is one of the most important things they try to make it available. They usually start that during pregnancy period. After that, they begin to think how to feed their infant and provide all the nutrients that they need. Many mothers around the world depend on feeding their infant by their breast milk while many others used artificial milk. However, they have to think that the first thousand day of the age is the most important days that affect the rest of the person's life. Therefore, these days have to be the healthiest days. Feeding your child nutritious foods and teaching him or her about good nutrition can help your child grow up healthy and establish healthy food choices for life. Optimal nutrition in the first two years of life: early and exclusive breastfeeding and continued breastfeeding for two years or more, together with nutritionally adequate, safe, age-appropriate, responsive complementary feeding starting at six months are critical to prevent stunting in infancy and early childhood and break the intergenerational cycle of undernutrition.

Breastmilk is the first feed given to a child. It is a natural and cost-free source of food for the babies. It is highly indispensable for both humans and animals. Early breast milk or the Colostrum, the yellowish, sticky breast milk produced at the end of pregnancy (liquid gold) full of nutrients and antibodies, is easier to digest than the artificial milk because of the breast milk components. Reduced risk of stomach upsets like chronic constipation, colic, and others, reduced risk of childhood diabetes and obesity, also it reduces the risk of tooth decay and the risk for vitamin E and Iron deficiency anemia, increased bone density and also it develops the baby's emotion and spirit.

Breast milk fights infections, promotes growth, offers the best nutrition, is easily digested, increases bonding time, always available and it is free of cost. Sometimes, women are forced to cease breastfeeding before the child is satisfied or even go for other alternatives like bottle feeding, thus denying the child its natural rights.

BREASTFEEDING CAN LEAD TO BETTER HEALTH, INCREASED BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND CREATES STRONG PARENTAL BONDS THAT AFFECTS FUTURE RELATIONSHIPS.

Children who are not adequately provided with nutrient-rich food and breastfeeding, they gradually go prone to undernutrition or otherwise called as malnutrition. Malnutrition is associated with 45% of child deaths. Malnutrition denotes insufficient intake of energy and nutrients to meet an individual's needs to maintain good health. Undernutrition in children is one of the most important social and health problems that face the young children in the modern world. Whether it is in the developed world or underdeveloped world, nutrition among the children has evolved to be a very important issue. Numerous children are faced with numerous physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and health challenges due to malnutrition. While a child in the poor neighbourhood in Africa is sleeping hungry, a child in the middle class neighbourhood in the United States is over indulging in unhealthy junk foods. As your baby grows, her nutritional needs grow with her. During the first two years, up to 75 per cent of each meal goes to building your baby's brain. Introducing your baby to solid foods and getting the timing right is so important. Before 6 months, breastmilk alone meets all your baby's energy and nutrition needs.

Start to introduce soft foods at 6 months when your baby needs more energy and nutrients than your milk alone can provide.

At 6 months, start giving your baby just two to three spoonfuls of soft food, such as porridge, mashed fruits or vegetables, twice a day.

?Start feeding both breastfed and non-breastfed babies solid foods at 6 months.?Waiting too long can put your baby at risk.

Healthful eating has many benefits for children. It can: * Stabilize their energy.

* Improve their minds.

* Even out their moods.

* Help them maintain a healthy weight.

* Help prevent mental health conditions. These include depression, anxiety, and ADHD.

Ensuring that infants nutritional needs are met requires that complementary foods be:

* timely C meaning that they are introduced when the need for energy and nutrients exceeds what can be provided through exclusive breastfeeding;

* adequate C meaning that they provide sufficient energy, protein and micronutrients to meet a growing child's nutritional needs;

* safe C meaning that they are hygienically stored and prepared, and fed with clean hands using clean utensils and not bottles and teats;

* properly fed C meaning that they are given consistent with a child's signals of appetite and satiety, and that meal frequency and feeding are suitable for age.

Nutrition is important at every age. Your children need proper nutrients stay healthy and strong, and grow up healthy and strong. Nutrition for children can also help establish a foundation for healthy eating habits and nutritional knowledge that your child can apply throughout life. Adequate nutrition during infancy and early childhood is essential to ensure the growth, health, and development of children to their full potential. The link between good health and balanced nutrition is way too important to be ignored for any child because dietary habits that are inculcated in childhood are often carried into adulthood. Making small changes in the diets of kids today can make a huge impact in the long run.

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FEED SMART RIGHT FROM THE START

At first glance it may appear as something that starts from breast feeding but literally the right feed starts from the early stages of maternity, it encourage the bond between the mother and child. The national nutritional week is widely observed from September 1 to September 7 to create awareness about good nutrition and health .The theme of 2021 national nutritional week is 'Feeding smart right from the start'. This week is observed to make people to understand the importance of nutritional adaptive eating habit so that they can maintain a healthy life style .The government takes up various initiatives to spread awareness about the right nutritional diet. Healthy mind resides in a healthy body and for that food is not alone the factor that keep man healthy, apart from this, mental, social and physical health are also the influencing factors.

According to World Health Organisation, health is a complete state of physical, mental, social well being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. To maintain good health it is necessary to maintain balanced diet. Thus, balance diet is one that fulfils all of a person's nutritional needs. Humans need a certain amount of calories and nutrients to stay healthy. Balanced diet provides all the nutrients a person require, without going over the recommended daily calorie intake.

The maternal bond between a women and her biological child usually beings to develop during pregnancy .The pregnant female adapts her lifestyle to suit the needs of the developing infant leading the mother feel more attach to her child. Nutritious food feed on by the mother gives rise to healthy baby.

In case of infants the only means of getting the proper nutrition is by the breast milk. For the infants it's better to avoid formula milk. After the introduction of other foods it recommends continuing to breast feed till the age of four. There are hundreds of troubleshoot physical and emotional which, influence the mother-infant bonding process. Attachment theory is based on the based on the belief that the mother-child bond is the essential and primary force in infant development, and thus forms the basis of coping, negotiation of relationships, and personality development. If the mother is absent or unavailable for the child, a primary caregiver serves the mother's role.

In all the ages of a human life food and nutrition plays a vital role. In preschool children they require more nutritious food as the development of brain and bones happens at this stage. Nutrition for children can also help in establishing a foundation for healthy eating habits and nutritional knowledge that the child can apply throughout life. Parents play an important role in feeding children and provide examples of healthy eating habits. Preschoolers copy what they see parents do; if they have unhealthy eating habits their children. Involve children in choosing and preparing of foods. Teach them to make healthy choices by helping them to pick nutritious based. To prevent dehydration encourage children to drink fluid regularly during physical

activities hence drink several glasses of water. Select foods which are rich in calcium, magnesium, potassium, and fibre.

Adolescence is a significant period for physical growth and sexual maturation. Nutrition being a vital determinant of physical growth of adolescents is an area that needs more attention.

Inadequate nutrition intake during this stage can have serious consequences throughout the reproductive years and beyond.

Elderly, good nutrition is important, no matter what your age. It gives you energy and can help you control your weight it may also help prevent some diseases, such as osteoporosis, high blood pressure, heart disease and type two diabetes mellitus. But as you age, your body and life changes and so does what you need to stay healthy. Eat food that gives you more nutrients without a lot of extra calories such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains likes' oatmeal, brown rice, fat free or low fat milk and cheese or soy or rice milk that has added vitamin D and calcium

Functions of various food components; proteins are the greatest importance in nutrition. Proteins require are body building and help in repair and maintenance of body tissues. Fat are high energy foods and source of energy. They also make the food more palatable and provide fat soluble vitamins. Vitamins and minerals are required in small quantities. They do not yield energy bit enable the body to use other nutrients and also play in major role in growth, repair and regulation of vital body functions. Carbohydrates form the major component of most diets and are the major source of energy. Requirements for iron and calcium are particularly increased in middle age. Calcium is rich in body mass and skeletal growth. Zinc is especially important because of its role in growth and sexual maturation.

Why nutrition important – the right nutrition is helps the body to develop and function properly. It helps us to maintain our mental and physical health. Nutrition focuses on our well being.intead that money can be used for other useful and important purpose. When we do not get the right nutrition we are prone to many harmful diseases. The right nutrition makes our immune system get strong.

Helping the poor and the needy ones can be can be encouraged well; there are lots of people who are around the streets without even a day meal. Provide them with nutritious food and let's help each other building up a strong nation. As the theme says let's start feeling smart right from the starting of each day, each individual, right from the maternity as well even us.

We each individual has a major role in building up healthy India and reduce poverty by providing nutritious midday meal for children adding supplementary food to girls pregnant women and old age. Spread awareness among the people to meet their requirement of food according to their occupation. Join our hand together to work to built up healthy nation.

Let's prepare a healthy body and a sound mind, which leads to the fresh community. Add on
balanced diet food.

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FEED SMART RIGHT FROM THE START

“Children of today will make the India of tomorrow, the way we bring them up will determine the future of our country” – Jawaharlal Nehru

It is said that “you are what you eat.” Diet plays a significant role in deciding your health and well-being. A healthy, nutritious, and well-balanced diet enhances the quality of life while a poor diet will take you close to morbidity and illnesses. This is why the motto of this year’s National nutrition week – ‘feed smart right from the start’ is of importance and relevance for India. Nearly half of all under-5 child mortality in India is attributable to undernutrition. It is about time we Indians give importance to malnutrition in children and find means to fight it. The world is in a race to be smarter than ever. We now have smart phones, watches, even cars now have become smart. ‘Feeding “smart” right from the start’ is the way to go with child nutrition just like everything else on the planet now. Because poor nutrition in the first 1000 days of a child’s life can also lead to stunted growth, which is associated with impaired cognitive ability and reduced school and work performance. Making adjustments in children’s diet today will transform their health while giving them happy and wholesome future years. The ‘Start’ to feeding smart starts as early as during pregnancy and continues all the way till a certain age after birth. Like Nehru said, children are the future of the country and if they are fed smart the country’s future will be smart as well.

Adequate Nutrition is essential for human development. Malnutrition includes both undernutrition as well as over-nutrition and refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in the intake of energy, protein and/or other nutrients. An inadequate diet is what leads to malnutrition. Malnutrition is a condition which is caused by an imbalance between what a person eats and the nutrients that they need to maintain good health. Malnutrition can occur in children of all ages, but young children are the most vulnerable. The World Health Organization has stated that malnutrition is the single most dangerous threat to global public health. They estimate that malnutrition is the underlying cause of 3.1 million child deaths each year and leads to lasting damage for millions of other children. Malnutrition makes children more vulnerable to severe diseases. Chronic malnutrition or stunting—when children are too short for their age because they have not been adequately nourished, received inadequate care and/or live-in unhygienic environments—can leave a devastating and permanent impact on a child’s physical and cognitive capabilities. The largest window of opportunity for a child’s health occurs in the first 1,000 days—from the start of a woman’s pregnancy to her child’s second birthday. Mothers who are malnourished during their pregnancy can experience complications giving birth. Many children are born small because their mothers are undernourished. Severely malnourished mothers can also have trouble breastfeeding their infants.

Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival. However, nearly 2 out of 3 infants are not exclusively breastfed for the recommended 6 months—a rate that has not improved in 2 decades. We know that breastfeeding for the first six months of a child’s life has health benefits that extend into adulthood. However, if a mother is too malnourished to breastfeed, these health benefits may not be passed on and a child can be at

risk for malnutrition. This is especially true in developing countries. Mother's milk is one of the first things fed to a child. Breast milk provides the ideal nutrition for infants. It has a nearly perfect mix of vitamins, protein, and fat everything the baby needs to grow. And it's all provided in a form more easily digested than infant formula. Breast milk contains antibodies that help your baby fight off viruses and bacteria. Breastfeeding lowers the baby's risk of having asthma or allergies. Plus, babies who are breastfed exclusively for the first 6 months, without any formula, have fewer ear infections, respiratory illnesses, and bouts of diarrhea. They also have fewer hospitalizations and trips to the doctor. Breastfed children perform better on intelligence tests, are less likely to be overweight or obese and less prone to diabetes later in life. Breastfeeding has been linked to higher IQ scores in later childhood in some studies. It's been thought to lower the risk of diabetes, obesity, and certain cancers as well, but more research is needed.

Commercially prepared infant formulas are a nutritious alternative to breast milk, and even contain some vitamins and nutrients that breastfed babies need to get from supplements. Manufactured under sterile conditions, commercial formulas attempt to duplicate mother's milk using a complex combination of proteins, sugars, fats, and vitamins that aren't possible to create at home. So if you don't breastfeed your baby, it's important to use only commercially prepared formula and not try to make your own. Breastfed babies have fewer infections and hospitalizations than formula-fed infants. During breastfeeding, antibodies and other germ-fighting factors pass from a mother to her baby and strengthen the immune system. This helps lower a baby's chances of getting many infections. As with breastfeeding, there are some challenges to consider when deciding whether to formula feed. Lack of antibodies. None of the antibodies found in breast milk are in manufactured formula. So formula can't provide a baby with the added protection against infection and illness that breast milk does. Can't match the complexity of breast milk. Manufactured formulas have yet to duplicate the complexity of breast milk, which changes as the baby's needs change. Planning and organization. Unlike breast milk — which is always available, unlimited, and served at the right temperature — formula feeding your baby requires planning and organization to make sure that you have what you need when you need it. Parents must buy formula and make sure it's always on hand to avoid late-night runs to the store. And it's important to always have the necessary supplies (like bottles and nipples) clean, easily accessible, and ready to go — otherwise, you will have a very hungry, very fussy baby to answer to. With 8-10 feedings in a 24-hour period, parents can quickly get overwhelmed if they're not prepared and organized. Expense. Formula can be costly. Powdered formula is the least expensive, followed by concentrated, with ready-to-feed being the most expensive. And specialty formulas (such as soy and hypoallergenic) cost more — sometimes far more — than the basic formulas. During the first year of life, the cost of basic formula can run about \$1,500. Possibility of producing gas and constipation. Formula-fed babies may have more gas and firmer bowel movements than breastfed babies.

The cost of malnutrition to the global economy in lost productivity and health care expenditures is staggering. Malnutrition isn't just a problem of hunger in developing countries—it exists in all regions and across socio-economic classes. The effects on human health Besides undernutrition, malnutrition also includes micronutrient-deficient diets and overweight and obesity. Chronic malnutrition can have serious, often life-threatening, health consequences, especially for children. Undernutrition can lead to physical and cognitive stunting, and makes children more susceptible to infectious diseases. Micronutrient deficiencies can cause severe

illnesses and physical impairments, including anemia, mental retardation, blindness, and spinal and brain birth defects. Overweight and obesity increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease, cancer, joint problems and gall bladder problems.

There are many effects of malnutrition on social and economic development. Malnutrition keeps people from reaching their full potential. Malnourished children underperform in school, limiting their future job opportunities. Malnourished adults are less able to work, contribute to local economies, and provide care for their families. Malnourished mothers are more likely to have underweight children, who will in turn have a higher risk of physical and cognitive impairment. This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and economic stagnation. Social effect of malnutrition. Poverty amplifies the risk of, and risks from, malnutrition. People who are poor are more likely to be affected by different forms of malnutrition. Also, malnutrition increases health care costs, reduces productivity, and slows economic growth, which can perpetuate a cycle of poverty and ill-health. Research indicates that malnutrition in early life may result in reduced social responsiveness, a lack of interest in the environment and inadequate emotional development by school age.

To feed smart it is important to know the nutrients the child needs while growing up such as; Calcium - Helps build strong bones and teeth, Fat - Creates energy, helps the brain develop, keeps skin and hair healthy, and protects against infections, Folate - Helps cells divide. Iron - Builds blood cells, and helps the brain develop. Breast-fed babies should receive iron supplements, Protein and carbohydrates - They provide energy and fuel growth, Zinc - Helps the cells grow and repair themselves. Vitamins such as: Vitamin A - Keeps skin, hair, vision, and the immune system healthy, Vitamin B1 (thiamine) - Helps the body turn food into energy, Vitamin B6 - Keeps the brain and immune system healthy, Vitamin B12 - Keeps nerve and blood cells healthy, and makes DNA -- the genetic material in every cell, Vitamin C - Protects against infections, builds bones and muscles, and helps wounds heal, Vitamin D - Helps the body absorb calcium from food, and keeps bones and teeth healthy. Breast-fed babies may need a D supplement, Vitamin E - Protects cells from damage, and strengthens the immune system, Vitamin K - Helps the blood to clot.

Well begun is half done. Nutrition well begun can do wonders for a child as he/she grows. But feeding smart should not just be about food and nutrients. Parents and teachers should feed the children with right ideas and be a good example for them. Feeding them good thoughts is as important as feeding them nutritious food. A building is only as strong as its foundation. And the motto 'feed smart right from the start' is aimed at building such a strong healthy foundation for the future of society.

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