



Nutrition

Establishment of enteral feeding in preterm infants

Embleton ND, Koletzko B, Fewtrell MS, Domellöf M, Gruszfeld D, van Goudoever H, McNulty A

Statement of the standard

Early enteral feeding is established, based on a standard protocol, preferably with mother's own breast milk.



For parents and family

- Parents are informed by healthcare professionals about the importance of early enteral feeding and they are encouraged to provide breast milk.



For healthcare professionals

- A unit guideline on infant nutrition, including early enteral feeding, preferably with mother's own milk (MOM) is adhered to by all healthcare professionals.
- Training on infant nutrition, including early enteral feeding, preferably with MOM, is attended by all responsible healthcare professionals.



For hospital

- Training on infant nutrition, including early enteral feeding and lactation support is ensured.

Benefits

Short-term benefits:

- Reduced duration of parenteral nutrition and associated complications and costs
- Reduced risk of serious morbidities such as sepsis, or necrotising enterocolitis with human milk
- Improved nutritional status (including growth) at discharge

Long-term benefits:

- Improved neurodevelopmental and other health outcomes



For neonatal unit

- A unit guideline on infant nutrition, including early enteral feeding, preferably with MOM, is available and regularly updated.
- Units must have equipment available to support lactation 24 hours/day and staff who are able to support mothers in its use.
- Adherence to the unit guideline is monitored.



For health service

- A national guideline on infant nutrition, including early enteral feeding, preferably with MOM, is available and regularly updated.

