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The National Breastfeeding Committee was founded in 1994 as a consequence of a resolution of the 45th World Health Assembly. The members are scientists, paediatricians, obstetricians, delegates of breastfeeding support groups, midwives, and pediatric nurses. Its task is the promotion of breastfeeding in the Federal Republic of Germany. The National Breastfeeding Committee advises the Federal Government, formulates guidelines and recommendations, and supports initiatives to remove obstacles to breastfeeding. The National Breastfeeding Committee is active with regard to the implementation of legal restrictions for advertising of infant formula.

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GERMAN NATIONAL
BREASTFEEDING COMMITTEE

Recommendations for breastfeeding in infancy



Dear Mother, dear Doctor

With the following recommendations, the German National Breastfeeding Committee (**Nationale Stillkommission**) would like to contribute to the promotion of breastfeeding in infancy and to answer some questions which may arise during this time.

1. The optimal food for the infant is mother's milk. Mother's milk fed exclusively is, as a rule, sufficient for the first six months of life. Thereafter, in addition to complementary food, breastfeeding can and should be continued.
2. Exclusively breastfed infants do not need supplementary liquids.
3. Breastfeeding-on-demand is the best way to ensure that milk production meets the baby's needs and is a good basis for the development of an individual breastfeeding pattern. For this reason, 24-hour rooming-in should be the rule.
4. When a baby is fed on demand (in the beginning at least 6 to 8 times per day) enough milk is produced for one child or more children (twins, triplets). ("The demand determines the supply").
5. In the beginning the infant should be offered both breasts; later the mother can breastfeed on one or both breasts as she and her baby wish.
6. Correct attachment (the baby has a "mouthful" of breast) and frequent breastfeeding are the best ways to avoid plugged (milk) ducts, sore nipples and breast infections (mastitis).
7. Hungry infants should be fed especially often and offered both breasts.
8. During the first days of life breastfed children should only be weighed once a day under identical conditions. Thereafter, they should be weighed weekly or only at well-baby check-ups.
9. Breastfeeding mothers need psychological and practical support from fathers, relatives and friends.
10. Breastfeeding mothers should eat a balanced and varied diet and drink sufficiently (e.g. one glass of liquid per breastfeeding session).
11. If the mother needs medication, this does not automatically mean stopping breastfeeding, temporarily or permanently. In most cases an acceptable drug can be found which allows breastfeeding to continue. A doctor should be consulted in any case.
12. Breastfed children with diarrhea and/or vomiting should continue to be breastfed. If medically indicated, losses of fluids and electrolytes should be replaced with appropriate rehydration solutions.
13. In the case of severe breastfeeding and lactation problems, professional help from midwives, lactation consultants, paediatricians, or gynaecologists should be sought.
14. Support groups of breastfeeding mothers can help to avoid or solve breastfeeding problems. Addresses are available at the local public health office (Gesundheitsamt) or via

www.stillen-info.de

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