

Hazards of Bottle Feeding

Every mother wants to give best to her baby but almost 60% to 70% of new mothers while routine visit has a question, can she also bottle feed her child? I usually land up asking why she wants to do so. I came across multiple answers, few genuine though not many. Few I shall enlist here:

1. Milk output is less
2. Getting exhausted feeding every 2-3 hourly
3. Working mother
4. Baby not gaining weight adequately,
5. Problems with breast and nipple e.g. Cracked nipples, breast engorgement, etc.
6. Mother doesn't want to feed (to maintain figure-a myth)
7. Baby not accepting breastfeed
8. Travelling and many others.

Most of the pediatrician in India do not advice or recommend Bottle feeding because of following reasons:

1 NIPPLE CONFUSION: Firstly bottle nipple is soft as compared to mothers' nipple. Secondly bottle nipple pours the milk as compared to mothers' nipple where baby has to actively suck milk. Hence, baby gets easy milk from bottle than breastfeeding and thus can leave the tough task of breast feed.

2 INFECTION: Most of the times while bottle feeding, baby is fed in laying down position, where the milk gets accumulated in back side of mouth and nose. This stagnated milk can go to middle ear via eustachian tube (communicating tube between nose and middle ear). Milk here becomes carrier for bacteria from throat to middle ear and cause serious infection.

3 STERILIZATION: Boiling water sterilization is standard prevalent method, but during drying process it can get contaminated, also cleaning by cloth or brush can transfer infection. Even brush cleaning from inside of bottle can lead to micro-abrasions and can lodge infection in it and can get transferred to infant while feeding.

4 BONDING: Mother and child bonding takes place best while breastfeeding (skin to skin contact of baby with mother).

These are major reasons, barring that child is also devoid of best food in the world which is BREAST MILK.

I appeal all mothers to understand problems associated with bottle feeding. In case they still find genuine difficulties, they should meet up pediatrician and discuss it in details so that best can be worked out for the baby.

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