

Assessment of weaning practices adopted by the mothers in urban Udaipur, Rajasthan

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The period of weaning is the one during which a child becomes accustomed to the change from a diet consisting solely of his or her mother's milk, to one totally devoid of it, may take a year or more and it is one of the most crucial period in a child's life. Weaning practices are influenced to a great extent by the socio-economic status, education, religion, knowledge, attitude and beliefs of mother about childcare. The present study was undertaken to assess weaning practices adopted by mothers in urban Udaipur, Rajasthan. Data on demography and socio-economic aspects were collected by interviewing total 50 lactating mothers randomly selected from three areas of Udaipur city. Weaning practices adopted by mothers shows that 30 per cent mothers did not feed colostrums to their children, it will effect nutritional status of children in later ages. 68 per cent mothers stop to feed milk because of insufficient milk, it indicates poor health status of mothers. In feeding pattern 16 per cent mothers did not sterilize bottles. Only 38 per cent mother sterilize bottle just after one feed. These improper practices will be harmful for child's health and hygiene. Supplementary food pattern shows that in semi-solid food 60 per cent mothers feed khichdi to their children. In ready to eat food 36 per cent mothers have given biscuit to their children. Assessment indicates that mothers have to be educated about the importance of breast feeding, proper time to start weaning, advice against indulging in harmful feeding practice.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Weaning Practices, Colostrum, Supplementary food, Breast feeding

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India is a developing country and has achieved multifaceted socio economic progress with increasing industrialization and urbanization. This has influenced the life of the people including their feeding habits and practices, living style, economy as well as traditional mothering and child rearing practices. The scenario of breast feeding and weaning is influenced by the western culture and proceeding towards modernization and development wherein more women are joining the workforce, more exposure to newspaper and magazines and impressive advertisements on baby food and breast milk substitutes seems greatly to affect the weaning practices. The period of weaning is the one during which a child becomes accustomed to the change from a diet consisting solely of his or her mother's milk, to one totally devoid of it, may take a year or more and it is one of the most crucial period in a child's life. Weaning practices are influenced to a great extent by the socio-economic status, education, religion,

knowledge, attitude and beliefs of mother about childcare (Singhania *et al.*, 1990; Kalra *et al.*, 1982; Ghosh *et al.*, 1976). The present study was undertaken to assess weaning practices adopted by the mothers.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The study was conducted in Urban Udaipur, Rajasthan. There were fifty lactating mothers which were selected from three areas of Udaipur city. Total twenty respondents from Paharda, Ganeshnagar and thirty respondents from Shaktinagar areas were selected. The primary tools use in the study was a detailed performa. Information about weaning practices adopted by mothers were obtained by interviewing mothers. Each mother was contacted individually and was persuaded to answer the entire question in the questionnaire and her response was recorded

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data of present investigation were collected and statistically interpreted for obtaining the result which were arranged and discussed in accordance with specific objectives of the study and presented in the following heads.

Table 1 shows that the children studied equally distributed in age group of 6-8 months, 8-10 months, 10-12. The sex wise distribution reveals that there was much difference of sex among the children studied. Birth weight of children shows that 32 per cent children were 2-2.5 kg at birth.

Table 2 shows that at the time of study more than half (62%) mothers were in age group 24-28, 28 per cent were in age group 20-24 and rest 10 per cent were in age group 18-20 years. Educational status shows that 24 per cent mothers were illiterate, 26 per cent were middle passed and 40 per cent graduate. The per cent of preterm delivery was 22 per cent while 78 per cent mothers had full term delivery. Delivery type was normal in 82 per cent mothers and 18 per cent have caesarian delivery. Abortion pattern

shows that 52 per cent mothers had no abortion, 40 per cent mothers had one abortion. 14 per cent mothers faced complications during delivery.

Table 3 shows that 70 per cent mothers fed colostrums to their babies. 44 per cent children were breastfed until 12 months. Feeding practices shows that 56 per cent children were fed milk by bottle, only 38 per cent mother sterilized the bottle after one feed. In semi-solid food 60 per cent children were given khichdi. In ready to eat food 36 per cent mother gave biscuit to their children.

Conclusion :

The present study was undertaken to assess weaning practices adopted by mothers in Urban Udaipur, Rajasthan. Data on demography and socio-economic aspects were collected by interviewing total 50 lactating mothers randomly selected from three areas of Udaipur city. Educational status shows that 24 per cent mothers were illiterate Delivery pattern

Table 1: Information about infants			
		No. of child	Per cent
Sex	Male	31	62
	Female	19	38
Date of birth	6-8 month	25	50
	8-10 month	16	32
	10-12 month	09	18
Birth weight of child	1.5-2 kg	03	06
	2-2.5 kg	26	32
	2.5-3 kg	21	42

Table 2: Information regarding the mother of infants			
		No.	Per cent
Age of mother	18-20 yrs	5	10
	20-24 yrs	14	28
	24-28 yrs	31	62
Education	Illiterate	12	24
	Middle	13	26
	Graduate	20	40
	Post graduate	05	10
Time of delivery	Full term	39	78
	Pre-term	11	22
	Post-term	0	-
Type of delivery	Normal	41	82
	Caesarean	09	18
Number of abortion	0-0	26	52
	0-1	20	40
	1-2	04	8
Complication during pregnancy	Yes	07	14
	No	43	86

shows that 22 per cent mothers had preterm baby, 40 per cent mothers had one abortion. 14 per cent mothers faced complications during delivery. Thus, educational as well as physical status of mothers affected infants health status as 32 per cent children were 2-2.5 kg weight at birth.

Weaning practices adopted by mothers shows that 30 per cent mothers did not feed colostrums to their children, it affected nutritional status of children in later ages. 68 per cent

mothers stopped to feed milk because of insufficient milk, it indicates poor health status of mothers. In feeding pattern 16 per cent mothers did not sterilized bottles. Only 38 per cent mother sterilized bottle just after one feed. 46 per cent mothers sterilized milk bottles when required again. These improper practices were harmful for child's health and hygiene. Supplementary food pattern shows that in semi-solid food 60 per cent mothers fed khichdi to their children. In ready to eat

Table 3 : Information about weaning practices

		No.	Per cent
First feeding after delivery	Breast milk	30	60
	Jiggery water	10	20
	Glucose water	04	08
	Plain water	06	12
Colostrums	Yes	35	70
	No	15	30
Feeding until	0-6 month	18	36
	6-12 month	22	44
	Continue	10	20
Why milk stop	Insufficient milk	34	68
	Advice by elderly/ doctor	8	16
	Pregnant again	-	-
	Any other	8	16
Sterilize the bottle	Yes	19	38
	No	08	16
	When ever needed	23	46
When sterilize the bottle	Just after feed	19	38
	With other utensils	08	16
	When required again	23	46
Semi-solids	Rice	05	10
	Khichadi	30	60
	Daliya	10	20
	Egg	05	10
Ready to eat foods	Biscuit	18	36
	Cornflakes	05	10
	Bread	18	36
	Rusk	09	18

eat food 36 per cent mothers gave biscuit to their children.

Breastfeeding and weaning of an infant are not only crucial for optimal growth and development but also are important determinants of future physical and mental well being because of the rapid growth spurt and development of organs and tissues during the first year of life. Assessment indicates that mothers have to be educated about the importance of breast feeding, proper time to start weaning, advice against indulging in harmful feeding practice.

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