

14. Work with insurance companies to encourage coverage of breast pump costs and lactation support services.
15. All clinicians and physicians should receive education regarding breastfeeding. Volunteer to let medical students and residents rotate in your practice. Participate in medical student and resident physician education. Encourage establishment of formal training programs in lactation for future and current healthcare providers.
16. Monitor breastfeeding initiation and duration rates in your practice, and analyse what additional changes can be made to enhance your support for optimal infant and young child feeding.

Baby-friendly complementary feeding

Breastfeeding and complementary feeding are a continuum; consideration of one must include consideration of the other. As the name indicates, “complementary” feeding is a complement to breastfeeding. Complementary feeding is essential for continued growth after 6 months of age. New recommendations for the addition of first foods into the diet emphasize protein and micronutrients in addition to energy needs.

The *Ten Guiding Principles of Complementary Feeding* serve as a guide for feeding behaviours, and as BFHI is integrated with other programmes, there will be an increasing number of opportunities to build on its messages.

TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING²¹

- 1. DURATION OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING AND AGE OF INTRODUCTION OF COMPLEMENTARY FOODS.** Practice exclusive breastfeeding from birth to 6 months of age, and introduce complementary foods at 6 months of age (180 days) while continuing to breastfeed.
- 2. MAINTENANCE OF BREASTFEEDING.** Continue frequent, on-demand breastfeeding until 2 years of age or beyond.
- 3. RESPONSIVE FEEDING.** Practice responsive feeding, applying the principles of psychosocial care. Specifically: a) feed infants directly and assist older children when they feed themselves, being sensitive to their hunger and satiety cues; b) feed slowly and patiently, and encourage children to eat, but do not force them; c) if children refuse many foods, experiment with different food combinations, tastes, textures and methods of encouragement; d) minimize distractions during meals if the child loses interest easily; e) remember that feeding times are periods of learning and love - talk to children during feeding, with eye to eye contact.
- 4. SAFE PREPARATION AND STORAGE OF COMPLEMENTARY FOODS.** Practice good hygiene and proper food handling by a) washing caregivers’ and children’s hands before food preparation and eating, b) storing foods safely and serving foods immediately after preparation, c) using clean utensils to prepare and serve food, d) using clean cups and bowls when feeding children, and e) avoiding the use of feeding bottles, which are difficult to keep clean.

²¹ *Guiding principles for complementary feeding of the breastfed child*. Washington DC, Panamerican Health Organization, 2003. The whole document can be downloaded from http://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/guiding_principles_compfeeding_breastfed.pdf