

World Breastfeeding Week 2023: Lack Of Sufficient Breastfeeding Can Lead To Various Health Issues; Here's How

World Breastfeeding Week 2023: In this article, we discuss how lack of breastfeeding affects the health of the baby and the mother

World Breastfeeding Week 2023: This week celebrates breastfeeding as a natural way to feed babies



World Breastfeeding Week is an annual event that takes place from August 1-7 every year. It is celebrated globally to raise awareness and promote the importance of breastfeeding for the health and well-being of both infants and mothers.

The primary goal of World Breastfeeding Week is to empower women to make informed choices about breastfeeding and provide them with the support they need to initiate and continue breastfeeding. It aims to highlight the numerous benefits of breastfeeding, including improved nutrition for babies, stronger immune systems, reduced risk of illnesses, and enhanced bonding between mother and child.

Throughout this week, various activities and events are organised to promote the importance of breastfeeding. These include breastfeeding awareness campaigns, educational programs, workshops, and seminars conducted by healthcare professionals, lactation consultants, and breastfeeding advocacy organisations. The week aims to reach out to mothers, families, policymakers, and the general public to create a supportive environment for breastfeeding and address any barriers that may hinder its practice.

Celebrating breastfeeding

World Breastfeeding Week celebrates breastfeeding as a natural and normal way to feed babies, promoting its importance for the optimal health and development of infants while also recognising the mother's physical and emotional needs.

We can utilise this week to bring awareness towards the importance of breastfeeding. Lack of breastfeeding can have various health implications for both the baby and the mother. Read on as we discuss how lack of breastfeeding affects the health of the baby and the mother.

Adverse effects of lack of breastfeeding on the baby:

1. Weakened immune system

Breast milk contains antibodies that help protect infants against various illnesses and infections. Babies who are not breastfed may have a higher risk of developing respiratory tract infections, ear infections, gastrointestinal infections, and other diseases.

2. Increased risk of allergies and asthma

Breast milk helps develop a baby's immune system, reducing the risk of allergies and asthma. Formula-fed infants might have a higher likelihood of developing allergic conditions.

3. Digestive issues

Breast milk is easily digestible and provides appropriate nutrition for a baby's developing digestive system. Formula-fed babies may experience more digestive problems like constipation, diarrhoea, and colic.

4. Lower cognitive development

Breast milk contains crucial nutrients and fatty acids necessary for optimal brain development. Studies suggest that breastfed babies may have better cognitive function and lower risk of intellectual disabilities or developmental delays.

Adverse effects of lack of breastfeeding on the mother:

1. Reduced bonding

Breastfeeding stimulates the release of oxytocin, a hormone associated with maternal bonding and reducing stress levels. Mothers who do not breastfeed may miss out on this emotional connection.

2. Delayed uterine recovery

Breastfeeding stimulates uterine contractions, helping the uterus return to its pre-pregnancy size faster. Women who don't breastfeed may experience a longer postpartum recovery period.

3. Increased risk of breast and ovarian cancer

Breastfeeding has been linked to a reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancers. Women who do not breastfeed may have a slightly higher chance of developing these cancers later in life.

4. Increased risk of postpartum depression

Breastfeeding releases hormones that promote well-being and postpartum recovery. Women who don't breastfeed may have an increased risk of postpartum depression and anxiety.

It's important to note that while breastfeeding offers multiple health benefits, formula feeding is a viable alternative if breastfeeding is not possible or chosen by the mother. Modern infant formulas are designed to provide adequate nutrition to support healthy growth and development.

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