

MANAGEMENT OF LOW BIRTH WEIGHT & PRETERM BABIES

PG II (SEM)

PAPER NAME: MATERNAL AND INFANT NUTRITION

PAPER CODE: HSC M 206

DR. PRIYANKA SHANKAR

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

P G DEPARTMENT OF HOME SCIENCE

PATNA WOMEN'S COLLEGE

PATNA UNIVERSITY

E-mail: priyankahsc@patnawomenscollege.in

LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (LBW) BABY : A neonate whose weight is less than 2500 gm at birth irrespective of gestational age is a low birth weight baby.

PRETERM OR PREMATURE BABY: A neonate born before completion of 37 weeks of gestation.

CARE OF & MANAGEMENT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT / PRETERM BABIES

All LBW / Preterm babies have special problems.

There is a need to identify these LBW / Preterm babies that can be managed in the community/home or health centres and those who need to be referred.

Management of LBW /Preterm Babies at home

The first principle is to prevent the baby's room from being too cold or windy.

- “ The windows and doors should be kept closed to prevent a windy room.
- “ Care must also be taken to prevent fans or coolers blowing directly on to the baby.

The second principle is to prevent the baby from losing body heat.

- “ Mother/ caretaker must be instructed to adequately clothe the baby and keep the baby dry.
- “ Keeping the baby in close body contact with the mother will help to retain its body warmth.

and should be covered with a cap to maintain warmth in cool temperature.

- “ Mother should sleep with the newborn and maintain skin-to-skin contact when possible.
- “ Newborn should be kept in warm room.
- “ Newborn should not be kept on any cold surface.
- “ Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) can be practiced.

The third principle is to provide enough energy for heat production by the baby.

- “ These babies must therefore, be fed early and frequently (1-2 hrly) to provide sufficient energy for the baby.

Low Birth Weight / Preterm babies should be referred to the hospital in following cases :

- Lethargy
- Refusal of feed
- Hypothermia
- Gasping, apnea (pause in between breathing)
- Seizures, vacant sternal, fits, convulsions

Feeding

The methods of feeding will depend upon:

a) Gestation and birth weight

b) The clinical well being of infant

c) To be able to feed directly from the breast, the newborn must have a good coordination between sucking and swallowing reflex. This is usually established by 34 weeks of gestation. Thus, babies more than 34 weeks (or birth weight > 1800 gram) can usually be breast fed.

Feeding LBW babies must be fed only breast milk.

- “ No pre-lacteal feeds should be given as it increases the risk of infection.**
- “ Early breast-feeding must be initiated, preferably within half to one hour after birth.**
- “ These babies must be fed frequently because initially most of**
- “ them suck briefly and also consume small quantities of milk with each feed. In addition, delayed feeding increases the risk of hypoglycaemia.**
- “ Some LBW babies suck poorly at the breast during the first few days, even though they are active. In such instances, the breast milk should be expressed into a clean vessel and fed to the baby with a spoon.**

at these babies are not bottle fed because:

a) It causes nipple confusion and can delay baby's ability to suckle from the breast & increases the risk of infection, especially diarrhoea.

b) It is important to note that breast milk has enough vitamins and minerals to meet the daily need of these LBW babies who are more than 34 weeks.

There is hence, no need to supplement them with any commercial multivitamin preparations.

Monitoring Adequacy of Feeding

a) Firstly, the baby will **gain weight**. Weight recording performed at least weekly in LBW babies weighing < 1800 grams is a good and sensitive marker of adequate nutrient intake. **The baby is expected to gain about 15-20 gm/day or 105 gm/week.**

b) In situations where frequent weight record is difficult:

- **Adequacy of urination (6-7 times/day),**
- **Maintenance of temperature and**
- **Sleep patterns (satisfied babies sleep for 2-3 hours after each feed) can be useful alternatives for assessment.**

Prevention of Infection

Preterm / LBW babies are prone to increased risk for infection, and thus, utmost care must be taken to prevent infection in all these babies.

Following measures should be adopted to prevent infection in LBW newborn :

- **Clean delivery practices (six cleans) i.e. clean room/surface, clean hands, clean cord tie, clean stump, clean blade & clean clothes for mother and baby should be followed.**
- **Hand washing should be done before touching the baby.**
- **Exclusive breast feeding should be encouraged.**
- **Pre-lacteal feeds should not be given.**

Unnecessary handling of newborn should be avoided.

- **A person having infection such as skin infection, respiratory tract infection, diarrhoea etc. should not come in contact with these babies.**
- **Personal hygiene of the mother should be maintained.**
- **In case of danger signs baby should be referred to the hospital.**
- **Immunization schedule should be followed.**



*Your complimentary
use period has ended.
Thank you for using
PDF Complete.*

[Click Here to upgrade to
Unlimited Pages and Expanded Features](#)

THANKS...