



Optimizing Breastfeeding for Infants with Limited Physical Capacity

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Objectives

How to help infants with limited physical capacity to breastfeed more.

Abstract

Background and aim:

A project of quality development.

Many newborns and infants in the neonatal care have a limited physical ability to breastfeed for several reasons, which include premature infants, ill newborns and infants, and illness with neurological impairments.

The aim of the project is to ensure, that the infants with limited physical abilities receive the necessary help to breastfeed, so that they can achieve their potential.

Method:

“The Knowledge Centre for Breastfeeding Infants with Special Needs” in Denmark has developed guidelines based on literature searches and international practices on how to help infants with limited physical abilities to breastfeed.

Content:

The guidelines consist of the following elements on how to exploit their limited abilities: Initiating breastfeeding at an early stage, optimizing milk flow, stimulating and enhancing the infant’s sucking reflex, optimizing latching onto the breast, breastfeeding positions, as well as optimizing the infant’s alert periods.

Implementation:

The hospital’s “Breastfeeding group” (covering all obstetric and paediatric departments) received special training concerning breastfeeding infants with limited physical abilities, as well as the staff at the neonatal intensive care unit. Several education days were offered to all staff at the Women and Child Centre at the hospital.

Conclusion:

Infants with limited physical abilities receive more help, and to a larger degree receive the same opportunities for breastfeeding as healthy infants.



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