Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants

Health Canada’s Recommendations from 6 to 24 months

Learning Objectives

• Identify the 8 principles and recommendations outlined in the NFHTI 6-24 months
• Identify key changes in recommendations
• Apply the 8 principles in a case example

Outline

• What are the challenges in advising?
• Background on the recommendations
• 8 Principles and Case Studies
• Summary
What are the most common questions from parents?

What are the challenges in advising parents on child feeding?

- Highly charged topics
- Linked with values, goals, traditions
- What’s really important? What’s the evidence?
- Role of our own experience (or lack of)

Background

- NFHTI 0-6 months updated in 2012
- NFHTI 6-24 months just release April 2014
What are the big changes?

- More emphasis on feeding skills, earlier offering of finger foods, and drinking from an open cup
- Guidance on potentially allergenic foods
- Emphasis on iron-rich foods
- Feeding infants from family meals

Principle 1

Breastfeeding is an important source of nutrition for older infants and young children as complementary foods are introduced.
Breastfeeding

• Support breastfeeding for up to 2 years and beyond, as long as mother and child want to continue

Principle 2

Supplemental Vitamin D (400 IU) is recommended for infants and young children who are breastfed or receiving breastmilk

What is the advice on Vitamin D for children 1 year and older?

• Continue Vit D for children who are breastfeeding/receiving breastmilk >1yr
• No need to supplement for children who have transitioned to cow’s milk
Principle 3

Complementary feeding, along with continued breastfeeding, provides the nutrients and energy to meet the needs of the older infant

Complementary Foods

- Recommend gradually increasing the number of times a day that complementary foods are offered while continuing to breastfeed

First foods

- Recommend iron-rich meat, meat alternatives, and iron-fortified cereal as the first complementary foods
Family Meals

- Encourage parents and caregivers to progress to introduce a variety of nutritious foods from family meals

Textures

- Ensure lumpy textures are offered no later than 9 months
- Encourage progress towards a variety of textures, modified from family foods, by 1 year of age

Introducing new foods if parents have concerns about food allergies?

- Re: Prevention of allergies
  - No evidence for any particular order of food introduction to prevent allergies
  - This includes children at higher risk of allergy (positive family history); (Health Canada, 2014; OSNPPH, 2010)
Introducing new foods if parents have concerns about food allergies?

• Can introduce any time after 6 months:
  – Fish, peanut products, wheat, milk products, soy, whole eggs

• Re: Allergy identification
  – When introducing, only start 1 per day, wait a couple of days before trying another
  – Watch for signs of allergy

Principle 4

Responsive feeding promotes the development of healthy eating skills

Responsive Feeding

• Allow the child to guide feeding
• Balances helping with encouraging self-feeding
• Eye contact and verbal encouragement (But NOT verbal or physical coercion)
• Responds to early hunger and satiety cues
Responsive Feeding

• Minimizes distractions; comfortable environment
• Different food combinations, tastes and textures
• Uses different methods of encouragement, even if foods are initially refused

Division of Responsibility

• The parent is responsible for what, when, where
• The child is responsible for how much and whether

Promoting Feeding Skills

• Promote finger foods to encourage self-feeding
• Encourage use of an open cup, initially with help
Principle 5

Iron-rich complementary foods help to prevent iron deficiency

Iron Deficiency

- Continuum from iron depletion to iron deficiency anemia
- Depletion more common than anemia
- Anemia associated with irreversible developmental delays in cognitive function

Preventing Iron Deficiency

- Continue to recommend a variety of iron-rich foods
- Ensure meat, meat alternatives, and fortified cereal are offered a few times each day
Preventing Iron Deficiency

• If parents and caregivers are introducing cow’s milk, advise them to delay until 9-12 months of age.
• Limit cow’s milk to no more than 750ml (3 cups or 24oz) per day

Case Studies

• Each table has one of 2 case studies
• 10 minute discussion at your tables
• Report out on:
  – What are the relevant principles from NFHTI?
  – What are the issues? Are you concerned?
  – How would you advise?

Principle 6

Foods for infants and young children must be prepared, served and stored safely
Safety

- Ensure infants and young children are always supervised during feeding
  - Family meals
- Avoid hard, small and round, or smooth and sticky solid foods. These may cause aspiration and choking

Preventing foodborne illness

- Promote safe food preparation and storage to prevent food poisoning.
- Avoid products containing raw or undercooked eggs, meat, poultry, or fish.
- Avoid unpasteurized products (milk, juice, etc)
- Avoid cross contamination (between cooked and uncooked foods)
- Avoid giving honey to a child under one year of age - botulism

Principle 7

From 1 year of age, young children begin to have a regular schedule of meals and snacks, and generally follow Canada’s Food Guide
Routine and Variety

- Recommend regular schedule of meals and snacks
- Offer a variety of foods from the 4 food groups

Added sugars and salt

- Recommend foods prepared with little or no added sugar or salt

Dietary Fat

- Explain to parents and caregivers that nutritious higher-fat foods are an important source of energy for young children
Milk

- Encourage continued breastfeeding or offering 500mL (2 cups, or 16oz) per day of homogenized (3%) cow's milk.

Juices, etc.

- Advise limiting fruit juice and sweetened beverages. Encourage offering water to satisfy thirst.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to be role models and instill lifelong healthy eating habits.

 Principle 8

Recommendations on the use of breastmilk substitutes.
Cow’s Milk

- Recommend commercial infant formula until 9-12 months of age
- Advise pasteurized whole cow milk (3% M.F.) be introduced at 9-12 months of age.
- Skim cow’s milk is inappropriate in the first 2 years

When to stop formula

- Advise that, for most healthy children, there is no indication for the use of commercial formulas beyond one year of age

Inappropriate milks <2yrs

- Advise that soy, rice, or other vegetarian beverages, whether or not they are fortified, are inappropriate alternatives to cow milk in the first 2 years
Bottles…

- Avoid prolonged bottle feeding.
- Advise against giving bottles at night

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Summary

- Increased emphasis on development of feeding skills, healthy habits
- Less importance on order of introduction of foods (including potentially allergenic ones)
- Variety of iron-rich foods as first foods; offer regularly between 6mths-2yrs
Resources for Clinicians

  - Includes some sample menus

Resources for Families

- Best Start: Feeding Your Baby 6 months to 1 year; www.beststart.org

Questions?