

Annex 1

Tips to ensure the nutritional quality of food given to a baby when food is limited

- Breast milk is the best milk. It provides both nutrition and immunity. If the baby is receiving breast milk, no need of other milk or dairy products.
- Home cooked foods are the best at all times. Ready to eat food from outside are costly, can be unhealthy and also may pose health risks.
- Spend whatever funds you have at hand to buy nutritious food items. Then cook them at home - rice, pulses, fish, sprats, 'koonisso', eggs, vegetables, green leaves, fruits, oil and coconut. Reduce unnecessary expenditure –formula milk, other milk food, baby rusks, commercial complementary food, biscuits, imported food items, sweets, junk food, other store bought ready to eat food
- Make best use of the nutritious food items found in your garden – green leaves, jack and jack seeds, bread fruit, cashew, 'kottamba', fruits, manioc, sweet potatoes and other yams....
- Can make nutritious curries by adding several items together especially when various food items are available in small quantities
- Add a little bit of oil to the baby's food – it gives the baby more energy - coconut oil/gingelly oil/thick coconut milk/margarine/butter/scraped coconut/blended or ground coconut, ghee depending on the availability ... **especially if you are unable to give the age appropriate amount of food or the number of meals a day**
- Egg (hard boiled/fried) is a food item which is very nutritious. A whole egg or at least a piece of egg in the baby's main meal or as a snack is a good option whenever possible.
- Roasted powdered sprats – add a little bit to the meal of the baby.
- Roasted and powdered legumes/nuts - add a little bit to the meal of the baby.
- Avoid making the food watery. Always give food in solid form.
- Feed the younger children in early months of complementary feeding, mashed rice with fish/sprats/ pulses/vegetables etc. added (whatever is available at the moment).
- Feed older children especially after one year of age from the family diet. Prepare the food less hot and salty for them (add more spices etc. for the consumption of adults only after separating the baby's portion).
- Try to make it a little bit more nutritious than the family diet - add an additional item to baby's plate than what is prepared for the rest of the family if possible – oil, scraped coconut, roasted and powdered sprats, an egg or at least a piece, a piece of fish etc.

Annex 2

What to offer the baby when foodstuff is very limited

- 1st 6 months – Demand feeding (breastfeed whenever the baby demands)
- Spending for formula milk is an added burden for you and your family's wellbeing. If breastfeeding at least once a day, increasing the frequency of suckling will increase your breast milk supply.
- Spend whatever funds you have at hand to buy nutritious food items and cook them at home- rice, pulses, fish, sprats, 'koonisso', eggs, vegetables, green leaves, fruits, oil, coconut....
- Cultivate a home garden if possible/ get support from neighbours with home gardens, community, to obtain green leafy and other vegetables, fruits etc. for the baby
- If food is very limited -
 - Babies need only a small amount of food compared to adults – so try to give that small amount as nutritious as much as possible
 - Try to give the main meals at least. For a breastfeeding baby – remember to breastfeed at snack times especially if there is no other nutritious food to give.
 - Keep the nutritious food items reserved for the neediest members of the family – children, pregnant mothers, lactating mothers.
 - If Thripasha is available (for undernourished children) – give Thripasha as snacks.

Even with limited food, nurturing care makes the babies grow better when compared with limited food without nurturing care.

Annex 3

A few tips on responsive feeding

Food refusal is common when the children are not used to responsive feeding from the very beginning of starting on food which may lead to wastage of food in addition to making the meal time troublesome. Therefore, it is important to learn and practice responsive feeding especially during these times.

- Know the age appropriate frequency of meals for your baby. Avoid giving frequent snacks – it will reduce the appetite for main meals
- Know the appropriate quantity of food per main meal for your baby. Kids need a relatively small quantity of food per meal. Forcing them to eat more will lead to food refusal.
- Let the child develop a healthy appetite for meals
 - Avoid giving sugary foods as much as possible and avoid junk food – children tend to get addicted to these and refuse healthy food
 - Stick to the age appropriate breastfeeding frequency (unless advised otherwise for medical reasons). Breastfeeds will have to be given after a meal and not before the meal
- Have healthy interactions during meal times –
 - Have family meal times. Make the family sit and eat together without other distractions such as television or smart phones.
 - Feed the young babies. Help them develop feeding skills while being fed by an adult.
 - Parents may try to feed older children themselves without letting them even touch the food, which is not advisable. Let older children eat by themselves and let them learn good feeding skills under your supervision. Pay attention to the child and exercise patience during meal times.
 - Make the meal times interesting and stimulating by letting the child learn about food and feeding; praise them for their feeding skills and good feeding practices.

Nurturing care even when the food is limited will result in better growth than limited food without nurturing care.