

IMS Act

The Infant Milk Substitutes (IMS), Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Amendment Act, 2003

THE IMS ACT PROHIBITS

- Advertising and promotion of infant milk substitutes, feeding bottles, or infant foods.
- Unauthorized labelling of products, including complementary foods, such as the use of images of mothers and children or words that imply superiority to breastmilk.
- Supply and distribution of infant milk substitutes, feeding bottles, or infant foods.
- Educational materials, including advertisements, that promote infant milk substitutes, feeding bottles, and infant foods.
- Sponsorships, gifts, fellowships, and financial benefits to health care providers and their associations.



BREASTFEEDING SAVES LIVES AND IMPROVES HEALTH OF INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND NATIONS!

Initiating breastfeeding within one hour of birth can **prevent about 20%** of new-born deaths

Exclusive breastfeeding can save lives annually of

820,000
< 5 children

Infants exclusively breastfed for six months are **11X** less likely to die from diarrhoea and **15X** less likely to die from pneumonia

YET

in India, each year thousands of children's lives are put at risk from poor breastfeeding and infant feeding practices. National data shows that only:



42%

of mothers initiate breastfeeding within the first hour of birth

1/2

children are exclusively breastfed for the first six months

GOVERNMENT POLICY MAKERS!



Renew your commitment to breastfeeding with these actions:

- 1 Operationalize a system for ongoing and periodic monitoring and enforcing the IMS Act that includes clear roles and responsibilities for different actors.
- 2 Appoint district and state level officers to monitor and report violations against the IMS Act in advertising, commercial, retail settings, and at health facilities.
- 3 Devise and enforce strict penalties for breastmilk substitute companies that do not comply with the IMS Act.
- 4 Ensure that all infant milk substitutes, feeding bottles, and infant foods such as “growing up milks” sold or distributed meet the standards outlined in the IMS Act, the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act of 1954, and the Bureau of Indian Standards.
- 5 Include implementation of Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative and adherence to IMS act as part of Quality Assurance and Certification of both public and private health facilities.
- 6 Systematically strengthen the capacity of health personnel at all levels to provide support and counselling on infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and ensure health systems are free of unethical marketing practices.
- 7 Establish more Lactation Management Centres to ensure that in cases where mothers face difficulties in breastfeeding, they have access to skilled support.

Citations

1. Begum, K., & Dewey, K., Alive & Thrive Insight, “Impact of early initiation of exclusive breastfeeding on newborn deaths,” 2010.
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3. The Lancet Breastfeeding Series, 2016.
4. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), 2015-16
5. The Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 as Amended in 2003 (IMS Act).
6. UNICEF and World Health Organization (2009). Acceptable medical reasons for use of breast-milk substitutes. Available from: https://www.who.int/nutrition/publications/infantfeeding/WHO_NMH_NHD_09.01/en/