

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

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS!



Become a breastfeeding champion by:

- 1 Strongly promoting breastfeeding as the safest, healthiest, and most nourishing methods of feeding to every new and expectant mother and families.
- 2 Supporting early initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour after birth and providing counselling to support exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life.
- 3 Advising use of expressed milk or seeking support from a lactation management counselor expert in case a mother faces difficulty in breastfeeding.
- 4 Providing proper guidance on how to use IMS for infants only based on the World Health Organization guidelines on "Acceptable Medical Reasons for Use of Breastmilk Substitutes."
- 5 Informing mothers and their family members the hazards of improper use of infant milk substitutes, feeding bottles, and infant foods.
- 6 Never giving an impression or creating a belief that feeding infant milk substitutes and infant foods are equivalent to, or better than, a mother's breastmilk.
- 7 Not accepting sponsorships, gifts, fellowships, and financial support for conferences/workshops from breastmilk substitute companies
- 8 Not accepting or distributing samples of infant milk substitutes, feeding bottles, or infant foods.

Health care providers are not only responsible for compliance to the IMS Act but also for reporting any violation of the IMS Act to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Ministry of Women and Child Development

Citations

1. Begum, K., & Dewey, K., Alive & Thrive Insight, "Impact of early initiation of exclusive breastfeeding on newborn deaths," 2010.
2. Barros, A., et al., The Lancet, Vol. 379, "Countdown to 2015: a retrospective review of survey data from 54 countries: equity in maternal, newborn, and child health interventions," 2012.
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/