

World Breastfeeding Week (WBW)

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Source: Press Information Bureau

The Food and Nutrition Board, Ministry of Women and Child Development, is organized a number of activities on the **theme “Empower Parents, Enable Breastfeeding”** during the World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) being observed from 1st to 7th August 2019. **The focus this year is on protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding.**

The objectives of World Breastfeeding Week are:

- To create awareness among the parents about breastfeeding
- Encourage parents to adopt breastfeeding
- Creating awareness about the importance of initiation and exclusive breastfeeding, and adequate and appropriate complementary feeding
- Providing advocacy material about the importance of breastfeeding.

Importance of Breastfeeding

- **It promotes better health for mothers and children alike.**
- It prevents infections like diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections in early infancy and thus reduces infant mortality
- It decreases the risk of mothers developing breast cancer, ovarian cancer, type 2 diabetes, and heart

disease and

- It protects infants from obesity-related illnesses, diabetes and increases the IQ

The correct norms of infant and young child feeding are:

- Initiation of Breastfeeding within an hour of birth
- Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life i.e. only breast Milk 'NO' other milk, food, drink or water
- Appropriate and adequate complementary feeding from six months of age while continuing breastfeeding
- Continued breastfeeding up to the age of two years or beyond

Significance

- This important nutrition intervention will help in breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition and aid the Government to achieve National Nutrition Goals and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030.
- According to WHO, increasing breastfeeding to near-international levels will help in saving more than 800 000 lives every year, the majority being children under 6 months.