

Feeding babies during emergencies

Floods, fire, heavy snow, blocked roads, strikes in key services, lack of money, homelessness, flu epidemics and other sudden emergencies put babies at risk.

Mother's milk provides food, water, warmth and comfort for the baby. The mother knows her baby is safer, so breastfeeding also reduces the mother's distress.



- If your house is flooded and you have no clean water, no electricity, and the roads are blocked, how does a baby get fed? When you are breastfeeding, feeding the baby is not a worry. You have all the baby needs.
- If you need to leave your home suddenly and in a panic, what do you bring for the baby? When you are breastfeeding, the baby needs only you. Baby does not need bottles, tins, water, steriliser, and other equipment in order to be fed.
- If you are travelling and roads are blocked, planes diverted, or trains cancelled, breastfeeding means no worry about feeding the baby.
- If money is short, there is no cost of formula and bottles when you are breastfeeding .



In an emergency situation mothers need...

- ◇ Reassurance and support
- ◇ Safe place to breastfeed
- ◇ Access to food, water and shelter
- ◇ Skilled help with feeding if there are any difficulties

In an emergency situation babies need...

- ◇ Their mother and her milk
- ◇ Protection from unneeded donations of formula

Myths about breastfeeding

Myth: Stress prevents mothers from producing milk

Fact: Stress does not prevent milk production, but may temporarily reduce the flow.

Solution: Stay near your baby, find a comfortable place, put your baby to the breast often and be assured your milk and the comfort of your arms are all your baby wants.

Myth: Once a mother stops breastfeeding, she can't start again.

Fact: A mother can restart breastfeeding, there is no time limit.

Solution: Put baby to breast often and ask for skilled assistance and support if you need it.

Myth: Some women can't breastfeed.

Fact: Very few women do not produce milk after their baby is born. Most medications, if they are in the milk, are not a risk to the baby.

Solution: Stay near your baby, find a comfortable place, put your baby to the breast often, ask about medications that are suitable when breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding is the one safe and secure source of food for babies. It is instantly available, provides active protection against illness, keeps infant warm and close to mother, and needs no money or equipment.



Breastfeeding is a shield to protect baby and mother in times of emergency.