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Public Health Important Day (August)

1-7th August: World Breastfeeding Week

19th August: World Humanitarian Day

Editorial: Exclusive Breastfeeding and Its Benefits

Globally less than 40% of infants under six months of age are exclusively breastfed (WHO) whereas according to Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), 2006, only around one in two children less than age 6 months are exclusively breastfed in Nepal. In other words, exclusive breastfeeding is short in Nepal with a median duration of 2.5 months. As last month was the month in which the World Breastfeeding Week (August 1-7) was celebrated, this editorial will focus on health benefits associated with exclusive breastfeeding. World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated every year from 1 to 7 August in more than 170 countries to encourage breastfeeding and improve the health of babies around the world.

According to WHO, exclusive breastfeeding is defined as, "giving no other food or drink – not even water – except breast milk." WHO adds, that infants should be exclusively breastfed – i.e. receive only breast milk – for the first six months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health. This helps ensure that colostrum, the yellowish, sticky breast milk produced at the end of pregnancy is given to the newborns.

Breast milk is the perfect food for the healthy growth and development of newborns and infants. It is the best source of nourishment for infants and young children. It is also safe and contains antibodies that help protect infants from common childhood illnesses - such as diarrhoea and pneumonia,

the two primary causes of child mortality in Nepal. Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure good child health and better survival. A lack of exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life contributes to over a million avoidable child deaths each year, says WHO. Beyond the immediate benefits for children, adults who were breastfed as babies often have lower blood pressure and lower cholesterol, as well as lower rates of overweight, obesity and type -2 diabetes. There is also evidence that people who were breastfed perform better in aptitude tests.

Exclusive breastfeeding also benefits mothers. Mothers benefit from early suckling because it stimulates breast milk production and facilitates

the release of oxytocin, which helps the contraction of the uterus and reduces postpartum blood loss. It reduces risks of breast and ovarian cancer later in life, helps women return to their pre-pregnancy weight faster, and lowers rates of obesity. Moreover, early initiation of breastfeeding also fosters bonding between mother and child.

At six months, complementary foods should be started in addition to breast milk for up to two years or more. The transition from exclusive breastfeeding to use of the complementary foods is a

very vulnerable period. It is the time when many infants become malnourished. It is essential therefore that infant receive appropriate, adequate and safe complementary foods



meaning that they provide sufficient energy, protein and micronutrients to meet a

growing child's nutritional needs. Moreover, foods should be prepared and given in a safe manner (with a spoon or cup, not in a bottle) to minimize the risk of contamination. In addition, WHO says, breastfeeding should be "on demand", as often as the child wants day and night; and bottles or pacifiers should be avoided.

On this very special day, the staff of the newsletter urges all health professionals to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week (August 1-7) as an advocacy for the pro-

tection and promotion of breastfeeding.

Until the next issue!

Amrit Banstola

PHP in NHRC Website

PHP is now listed in 'National Journals' section of **Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC)** website at <http://www.nhrc.org.np>

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Pokhara to be plastic-free city

POKHARA, JUL 18 -

Good news for those who want to see plastic-free Pokhara. The country's lake city will soon be without polythene bags. The Pokhara Sub-Metropolitan City on Sunday has taken firm steps to make the city plastic-free, launching a campaign and issuing an order that bans the use and sale of polythene bags thinner than 20 micron. The local authority resorted to this move in view of the harmful effects of plastic to people, environment and animals. "We want to rid the city of polythene bags within five years," said Sushil Poudel, an engineer of the sub-metropolitan city.

"To make Pokhara clean, healthy and beautiful, it is essential to do away with polythene bags," said environmental expert Krishna KC, adding that the ban should be effectively implemented. An estimated 40 million polythene bags come into use yearly in Pokhara that has the total population of more than 300,000. "There is no alternative than

to banning the use of polythene bags to save Pokhara and our environment," Poudel said. Officials of the sub-metropolitan city have urged all to take steps to create awareness among the people about the bad effects of plastic and also to cultivate the habit of using biodegradable bags.

Source: eKantipur.com

Bir Hospital sets example in medical waste management

KATHMANDU, JUL 19-

The country's oldest hospital has begun to manage their disposal of medical wastes. In a bid to set an example in medical waste management by managing highly infected waste piled up inside hospital premises, the Bir administration in cooperation with Health Care Foundation-Nepal (HECAF) had launched the medical waste management programme on July 20, 2010. The start of waste management is spreading a positive message and helping maintain cleanliness and hygiene of the hospital at the same time, say officials of the hospital. According to Sarita Shrestha, Housekeeping in-Charge of hospital, all 26 indoor wards, where patients are shifted for advance medical treatment and observation, have separate buckets for the segregation of waste. "We have been noticing fast recovery of the ailing patients after the new practice. Menace of cockroaches and rats has also declined," she said.

Three separate bins are placed to segregate biodegradable, degradable and nondegradable waste. Additional buckets have

been put up in the special wards such as ICU and chemotherapy. A needle disposing machine has been placed in the wards to destroy syringe right after the use. A study shows that 332 kg waste is generated by Bir Hospital everyday when there is 65 percent occupancy, while the waste volume reached over 500 kg during the full occupancy. Of the total waste, 75 percent is highly infectious. Apart from this, the hospital is also a mercury free zone now.

Source: eKantipur.com

Diarrhoea claims three children from single family

DAILEKH, JUL 23 -

Three children from a single family have died due to diarrhoea at Bajaha of Bishala VDC-1 of Dailekh district. The deceased have been identified as Pabitra, 10, Deepa, 6, and Nirmala, 4, daughters of Nara Bahadur Shahi. Deepa died on Friday night whereas Pabitra and Nirmala died the next day while undergoing treatment in their own house, said local resident Bishnu Shahi. There house is some 14 miles away from the district headquarter. According to Dr. Khagendra Jung Shah, Chief of the District Health Office, the family members were suffering from diarrhoea for four days after consuming poisonous mushrooms.

Source: eKantipur.com

Malnutrition-hit minor - arrives to hospital in serious condition

NEPALGUNJ, JUL 27 -

"Such an emaciated child I had seen only in a picture depicting hunger in Somalia," said Dr Bimal Dhakal of his new patient, 12-year-old Jamuna Buda. Jamuna was admitted to the Malnutrition Rehabilitation Centre of the Bheri Zonal Hospital four days ago. Just skin and bones, she weighs only eight kilogram, has lost her eyesight and weak to the point that she cannot even chew or swallow properly. Jamuna's mother Najara said that her growth was normal until the age of four. "First, she had a problem with her sight and then she started getting weak." Najara and her husband Dipak come from a remote Serabang village of Kada VDC in Rukum. With seven children to feed, the couple work as wage laborers to eke out living.

Owing to the lack of funds, the couple could neither take



Jamuna (lying on hospital bed), who weighs eight kg, has lost her eyesight and is so weak that she cannot even chew or swallow properly

Jamuna to hospital, nor provide nutritious diet to her. "We took her to local shamans. Some said she was hexed by witch and some said that our deity was mad and had cursed her with the disease," Najara said. *(continue on page 3)*

National News cont...

Malnutrition-hit minor – arrives to hospital in serious condition

(continue from page 2...)

"We, finally, managed Rs 10,000 on loan and took her to the district hospital and the doctor there advised us to bring her here." Bimala Poudel of the Malnutrition Rehabilitation Centre said there has been a slight improvement in Jamuna's condition in the last four days. She said that Jamauna is being administered milk, jeevanjal and liquefied food every two hours.

Source: ekantipur.com

Children's health, Nepal's wealth: New vaccines to inoculate children against diseases

KATHMANDU, AUG 05 -

In its comprehensive multi-year plan 2011-16 under the National Immunization Programme, the government will introduce new vaccines in the country. It intends to bring in typhoid, Measles and Rubella (MR), rotavirus and pneumonia vaccines. Among the four, MR vaccine—a combination-preventive of measles and rubella virus—will be introduced in the country by Jan 2012. In a study conducted by the Department of Health Services (DoHS), Teku, from 2004-2009, there were 3,710 confirmed rubella cases and more than 95 percent of the affected were less than 15 years of age. "MR vaccine saves a child from measles and rubella," said Giri Raj Subedi, chief of Immunisation Section of Child Health Division under the DoHS. The vaccines will be administered to children from 9 to 15 months of age. Among the other three vaccines, the government has already given Patan Hospital the go-ahead to conduct a pilot survey for typhoid vaccine in Kathmandu Valley. Data till this April show 6,991 cases of typhoid were confirmed in the Valley. The majority of the cases was seen during the monsoon.

"We are yet to be sure of vaccines for diarrhoea and pneumonia. The use of the rotavirus vaccine has been recently launched in Sudan. As diarrhoea is a major killer of infants in Nepal as well, we are planning to introduce the rotavirus vaccine here in Nepal by 2015," said Health Ministry Spokesman Bal Krishna Subedi. At present, Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVA) has been supplying the pentavalent vaccine in Nepal. According to the contract, the government has to bear the cost of the vaccines after 2015.

Source: ekantipur.com

Nepal bans smoking in public places

KATHMANDU, AUG 07 -

Nepal has banned smoking in public and threatens to punish repeat offenders with steep fines. Airports, hotels, restaurants, government offices and public transport will now be smoke-free under the new law. Health Ministry official, Komal Prasad Acharya says government workers will issue fines of 100 rupees (\$1.40) to people violating the ban and up to 100,000 rupees (\$1,400) for repeat offenders. More than 40 percent of Nepalese smoke cigarettes or other tobacco products including hand-rolled bidis and hookah pipes, with more people puffing in the countryside than in cities. According to health ministry data, more than 15,000 people die due to tobacco-related diseases annually in Nepal.

Source: ekantipur.com

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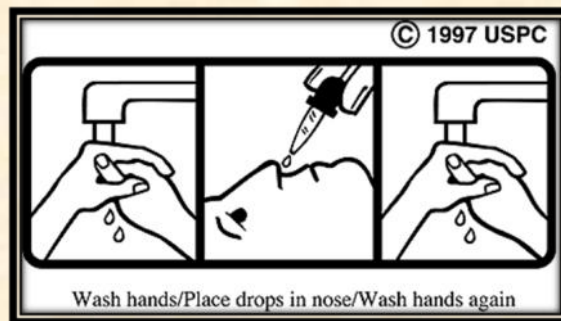
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PHP Special

Pictograms: Tool for Patients Counseling

-Words: Mr. Ashik Banstola

One of the important and foremost aims of the pharmacy professionals is to counsel the patient appropriately at right time providing complete information about the proper dose, dosing schedule and dosing regimen of the prescribed medication. Inability of patients to read and understand medical instructions may play major contributing factor to non-compliance. Particularly, in countries with high illiteracy like Nepal non-compliance has been a huge problem. Hence, educating and counseling patients on medical instructions have become an integral part of pharmacy professionals. The use of pictograms plays a vital role in the accomplishment of these tasks. A pictograph is a symbol or pictorial representation which represents an object or a concept by illustration. Pictures, photos, graphs, charts, maps, and symbols among others are some of the examples of pictograms.



In pharmacy practice, the use of these pictograms is often successful for communicating information about doses, medications, precautions, and warnings. Moreover, these pictograms are so eye-catching that they can easily capture the attention of patient as well as be helpful to patients in understanding, recalling, and adhering to health instructions.



In are the under-messages. States has given aid to keeping in could un-tograms tograms

“A pictogram is a symbol or pictorial representation which represents an object or a concept by illustration.”

other words, they helping hands in standing health For example, United Pharmacopeia (USP) 81 pictograms as an counsel patients well mind that patients derstand those pic-shown to them. Pic-are not only recom-for the literate ones means of providing



mended for the illiterate society but also as they can serve as one of the easiest patient information material.

Although some research on the effectiveness of pictograms has not supported the hypothesis that pictograms are beneficial for the acquisition and comprehension of information, most studies investigating health-related applications of pictograms have shown them to be of benefit in the comprehension and recall of instructions on prescription and over-the-counter medicines. However, the success of pictograms as a communication aid in pharmacy depends first on a rigorous design process, followed by well-designed, randomized, controlled trials using an appropriate method of evaluation. Moreover, they need to be culture specific and carefully explained.

>> The author is the Advisory of Public Health Perspective (PHP) Newsletter and is currently studying M Pharma (Pharmacology) at Mallige College of Pharmacy, Bangalore, India.

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400-500 words on any health related topic
Do not include any graphs, tables and citations
PP size photo in jpeg format

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Global Health

Cholera outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Congo

22 July 2011

Cholera outbreaks are being reported along the Congo River, affecting the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Congo.

There is high risk of the epidemic further spreading along the Congo River. The outbreak has been reported to have spread to new locations, particularly in Kinshasa, where there are large population groups with inadequate safe water.

In DRC, the outbreak was reported in March 2011 and has intensified in the last 3 to 4 weeks, affecting four provinces (Bandundu, Equateur, Kinshasa and P Orientale). As of 20 July 2011, a total of 3 896 cases, including 265 deaths have been reported, with an overall case fatality of 7%.

Source: WHO

Trailblazing HIV Doctors Jailed in Iran

8 August 2011

Dr. Kamiar Alaei and his brother, Dr. Arash Alaei, have been called pioneers for their community-based approach to HIV and AIDS in Iran.



Photo: CNN Since opening a hometown clinic in 1999, the men have been raising awareness about HIV, dispelling myths about the virus and treating people who are shunned because of it. They have also reached out to their neighbors in Afghanistan and Tajikistan

and worked with medical universities in Europe and the United States.

But in 2008, the Alaeis were arrested by the Iranian government. According to Kamiar, they were charged with "communication with an enemy government" and for trying to "overthrow the government." Kamiar says the charges had no merit, but he and his brother were found guilty and thrown into Iran's notorious Evin prison.

Source: CNN

Avian influenza - situation in Egypt - update 55

9 August 2011

The Ministry of Health of Egypt has notified WHO of one case of human infection with avian influenza A (H5N1) virus.

The case is a 6 years old female from Demnhoor district, Behira governorate. She developed symptoms on 12 July, and was hospitalized. She completed the course of oseltamivir, recovered and was discharged on 30 July. Investigations into the source of infection indicate that the case had exposure to poultry suspected to have avian influenza.

The case was confirmed by the Egyptian Central Public Health Laboratories, a National Influenza Center of the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance Network.

Of the 151 cases confirmed to date in Egypt, 52 have been fatal.

Source: WHO

Failing Women as Maternal Mortality Quadruples

9 August 2011

Only six sub-Saharan African countries have failed to reduce the number of women dying in childbirth over the last two decades. High-spending South Africa is among them, with maternal mortality rates more than quadrupling since 1990. Human Rights Watch researcher Agnes Odhiambo says this is largely due to a lack

of accountability.

Maternal mortality rates in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole have been reduced by a quarter compared to 1990 levels. But the continent's most developed economy is moving in the opposite direction: South Africa's maternal mortality rate in 1990 was 150 per 100,000 live births; in its 2010 MDG progress report, the country

reported this had risen to 625 per 100,000.

"HIV is a big factor in mater-

nal mortality in South Africa," says Odhiambo, adding that improved reporting means deaths that might have gone unrecorded in the past have also been added to the total .

Source: ipsnews.net

Cholera Epidemic Spreading in Somalia, WHO Warns

12 August 2011

A cholera epidemic is spreading in famine-hit Somalia, with alarming numbers of cases among people driven to the capital Mogadishu by a lack of food and water, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Friday.

The intestinal infection often linked to contaminated drinking water, causes severe diarrhoea and vomiting, leaving small children especially vulnerable to death from dehydration, according to the United Nations agency.

Some 4,272 cases of acute watery diarrhoea have been recorded so far this year just in Banadir Hospital in Mogadishu, mainly children under age five, causing 181 deaths; Dr. Michel Yao of the WHO told a news briefing .

Source: Thomson Reuters Foundation



Photo: UNICEF

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GREAT SAYING

“Every patient carries her or his own doctor inside.”

—Albert Schweitzer

Journal Watch

Obesity Indices amongst Diabetics in an Urban Population of Western Nepal

There is an increase in cases of diabetes amongst adult population of Kaski district of Nepal, according to a study published in the August 2011 issue of Journal of Diabetes & Metabolism.

A cross sectional study was carried out in 425 adults in the population (aged 20 years and above) of Pokhara sub metropolitan city of Kaski district using simple random sampling technique. A study instrument which included socio-demographic information and physical measurements of height, weight, and waist circumference (WC) was used to collect data. To analyze data, Chi-square test and odds ratio were used.

Of the total 425 individuals

examined, 116 (66 males and 50 females) were diabetic and 309 (131 males and 178 females) were non-diabetic. According to the study, proportion of diabetes showed an increasing trend with age. The prevalence of diabetes was significantly ($P < 0.001$) higher among individuals, aged 40 years and above (30.21%) as compared to those aged below 40 years (9.8%). Similarly, the proportion of diabetes was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher among males (33.5%) as compared to females (21.9%). The Body Mass Index (BMI) cut-off values that predicted diabetes status best for males and females were observed to be 20 kg/m² and 24 kg/m² respectively. The cut-off value for WC that predicted best diabetes status was considered

to be 80 cm for both males and females.

This study emphasizes the need for further epidemiological studies among adult populations of Nepal as presently there is an increase in cases of diabetes among them. The authors urge action by the MOH, universities and others to collaborate in research and the development of guidelines for the detection of obesity in Nepalese population and to enable adequate prevention, health promotion and early and effective treatment measures. Full text article is available at: *J Diabetes Metab* 2:134. doi:10.4172/2155-156.1000134

Authors: Joshi Hari Shanker, Syed Esam Mahmood, Mukesh Chandra Joshi and Iram Shaifali ◆

Socioeconomic Status and Lung Cancer Risk in Nepal

This article published on 2011 June issue of Journal of Tropical Pediatrics focuses on important home care practices such as feeding, hygienic, skin/cord care and thermal care practices for newborns prevailing in rural southern Nepal.

In this study, data were collected prospectively from more than 23000 live births in Southern Nepal from the time of birth through the first 2 weeks of life. According to the study, 771 (3.4%) were breastfed within 1 hour and 12191 (56.6%) were breastfed within 24 hour of birth. Similarly, colostrum was given to 18625 infants (81.2%). Pre-lacteal feeding was also common (67.7%). The study showed that 19004 infants (80.4%) received any pre-lacteal feeds taking into account differing information collected by two questionnaires, on Days 1 and 14.

Infants were washed a mean of 2.3

times (SD: 1.0). The water used to wash the babies, was warmed in almost all cases by either adding hot water to cold water (63.7%) or by warming the water directly (33.1%). Mustard oil was universally applied to the skin of infants (22971; 99.8%). The main reason for this practice was the belief that it makes the baby's body strong (69.6%).

Similarly, the study revealed that only 13.3% of the caretakers always washed their hands before caring for their infant and among these, less than one-third washed with soap. Moreover, according to the study, 82.2% of the babies slept in a warmed room and skin-to-skin contact was rare (4.5%). While the WHO recommends delayed bathing beyond 6 hour, such a delay in this setting was rare (11.7%) and is consistent with prior Nepal data where immediate bathing was near-universal.

This analysis of prospectively collected newborn care practices among more than 23000 newborns has identified priority areas that should be reinforced because they are included in a package of interventions to improve neonatal survival but have not yet been fully adopted in practice. Public health practitioners can take an active role in training, message development, and supportive supervision to help caregivers adopt these proper newborn home care practices.

Full text article at: *J Trop Pediatr* (2011) doi: 10.1093/tropej/fmr057

Authors: Dominique J. Karas, Luke C. Mul-lany, Joanne Katz, Subarna K. Khatri, Steven C. LeClerq, Gary L. Darmstadt, and James M. Tielsch ◆

WHO Publications

Bulletin of WHO Vol. 89, No. 08, 2011

The Bulletin of the World Health Organization is an international journal of public health with a special focus on developing countries. Since it was first published in 1948, the Bulletin has become one of the world's leading public health journals. As the flagship periodical of the World Health Organization (WHO), the Bulletin draws on WHO experts as editorial advisers, reviewers and authors as well as on external collaborators. Full bulletin is available at:

<http://bit.ly/rjx3rD>

WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2011: Warning about the dangers of tobacco

The number of people now protected by tobacco control measures is growing at a remarkable pace. The progress made on adopting measures that reduce the demand for tobacco is a sign of the increasing impact of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which continues to be one of the most rapidly embraced, measurably successful treaties in United Nation's history. Download is available at:

<http://bit.ly/ololr7>

Tuberculosis Prevalence Surveys

The first edition of this book "Assessing tuberculosis prevalence through population-based surveys" was published by the World Health Organization in 2007. Its aim was to provide guidance to countries about how to estimate the prevalence of tuberculosis (TB) disease through population-based surveys. Download is available at :

<http://bit.ly/n2GHni>

Risk Assessment of Vibrio Parahaemolyticus in Seafood

Vibrio parahaemolyticus are common causes of diarrhoeal disease worldwide. These marine micro-organisms, native in estuarine waters globally, concentrate in the gut of filter-feeding molluscan shellfish, such as oysters, clams and mussels. Raw and undercooked seafood, including finfish, represent the principal vehicle of transmission to humans. Download is available at:

<http://bit.ly/oVil0x>

APPLY FOR CAMPUS LIAISON

Participation on the PHP team is an opportunity to get involved in PHP activities, develop and demonstrate leadership skills, as well as work with some terrific colleagues. The campus Liaisons will have opportunities to shape the activities and strategic directions of PHP. In addition, Liaisons serve as their college representative to the PHP by helping to: reporting news from their college in general and the program of study in specific.

Serving as a campus liaison does not require a large time commitment. Campus liaisons distribute information, for example, by speaking at new student orientations and to your student society or association about PHP. PHP will provide necessary materials needed for this position. This position will also provide students with a unique opportunity to become more cognizant of health news around the nation.

Being a campus liaison for PHP is a great way to demonstrate the team work ability with the professional development as campus liaisons names and their colleges are mentioned in every issues of PHP.

If you are interested in participating as a Campus Liaison and have any questions about the Liaison position, please contact us.

Email: newsletter.php@gmail.com

Being Healthy

Enlighten yourself with Yoga

Yoga is a science that has been practiced for thousands of years. There are eight limbs of Yoga in which physical exercises (*Asanas*); Yoga Breathing (*Pranayama*) and Meditation (*Dhyana*) are basically linked for being fit and healthy. The health benefits of yoga are numerous and surprising. The one form of exercise can give you a multiple benefits. In totality, it not only promotes the physical health but also psychological and spiritual health. So, we urge you to start practicing Yoga.



Asanas are best practiced first in yoga routine, followed by *Pranayama* and then meditation. The practice of yoga involves stretching the body and forming different poses, while keeping breathing slow and controlled. The seven primary types of movements in Yoga exercise are flexion, extension, hyperextension, abduction, adduction, rotation, and circumduction. You can combine these movements to have a stronger, more flexible, and balanced body, for instance, Sun salutation (*Surya namaskar*). The *Pranayama* includes breathing techniques and exercises that helps clear and cleanse the body and mind. It is also used in preparation for meditation, and the practice of postures.

There are numerous benefits of yoga. It strengthens physical and mental aspects of the body. Moreover, Yoga practice massages internal organs, thus improving the immune system of the body. A consistent yoga practice also enhances better circulation and oxygenation of the body. In addition, it helps to balance metabolism to maintain a healthy body weight. It stimulates the detoxification process within the body which delays aging. Similarly, it promotes psychological and spiritual health. Yoga is also one good way of relaxation. It reduces stress and depression through a combination of controlled breathing exercises, stretching and meditation. Besides, it can ease the tension building in your muscles and joints without experiencing fatigue. The basic yoga moves involved in the poses and exercises will provide inner peace and radiant health as well. The studies

published on December 2010 newsletter of Harvard Medical School, suggest that Yoga has a positive effect on a variety of heart problems like high blood pressure, cholesterol level etc. Researchers have also shown that eight weeks of yoga practice can result in



Basically, Yoga exercise requires 30 minutes each day. To practice yoga, you need a mat or a blanket and a small exercise space. It is best to practice on an empty stomach in the morning before 2 hours of breakfast with a trained teacher. However, *Asanas* and *Pranayama*



carefully. In case, you have certain medical conditions, consult a health professional before starting to do the exercises. If you are pregnant, notify the instructor for special guidelines .

Precautions:

- ◆ Do not practice yoga in direct sunlight.
- ◆ Avoid cold wind and insects.
- ◆ Never practice yoga under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- ◆ Girls, should avoid certain postures such as inversions (headstands, shoulder stands, etc.) during heavy menstruation. Is this scientifically true? I doubt it.
- ◆ Avoid doing hard exercises like jogging, cycling, swimming, and weightlifting immediately after Yoga .

better concentration and more motivation.

may be practiced at any time of day except within 2-3 hours after meals. Similarly, meditation may be done at any time of day when you feel both awake and relaxed. On the other hand, while performing Yoga, it is advisable to follow the instructions exactly as wrong postures will leave adverse effects on your body parts. You also need to pay particular attention to coordination between your body movements and breathing. You can proceed slowly and



World Breastfeeding Week (1–7 August 2011)

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) was formed in 1991 to act on the Innocenti Declaration (1990) to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. As part of its action plan to facilitate and strengthen social mobilisation for breastfeeding, WABA envisioned a global unifying breastfeeding promotion strategy. A day dedicated to breastfeeding was suggested to be marked in the calendar of international events. The idea of a day's celebration was later turned into a week.

This has become to be known as World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) celebrated every 1-7 August to commemorate the Innocenti Declaration. WBW was first celebrated in 1992. Now it involves over 170 countries and is endorsed by UNICEF, WHO, FAO and IPA.

Overall coordination of WBW is done at the WABA Secretariat in Penang, Malaysia, which includes the selection of the theme and slogan, identifying resource persons for a specific theme and the preparation and dissemination of WBW materials such as the calendar announcement, posters, action folders and banners. These advocacy materials serve to stimulate action among local groups, governments, UN and other agencies and other issue organizations for their own WBW activities in their area/country.

Breastfeeding is the best way to provide newborns with the nutrients they need. WHO recommends exclusive breastfeeding until a baby is six months old, and continued breastfeeding with the addition of nutritious complementary foods for up to two years or beyond.

Up to what age can a baby stay well nourished by just being breast-fed?

Infants should be exclusively breastfed – i.e. receive only breast milk – for the first six months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health. "Exclusive breastfeeding" is defined as giving no other food or drink – not even water – except breast milk. It does, however, allow the infant to receive oral rehydration salts (ORS), drops and syrups (vitamins, minerals and medicines). Breast milk is the ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants; breastfeeding is also an integral part of the reproductive process with important implications for the health of mothers.

WHO recommends that infants start receiving complementary foods at six months (180 days) of age in addition to breast milk. Foods should be adequate, meaning that they provide sufficient energy, protein and micronutrients to meet a growing child's nutritional needs. Foods should be prepared and given in a safe manner to minimize the risk of contamination. Feeding young infants requires active care and stimulation to encourage the child to eat.

The transition from exclusive breastfeeding to full use of family foods is a very vulnerable period. It is the time when many infants become malnourished, contributing significantly to the high prevalence of malnutrition in children under five years of age worldwide. It is essential therefore that infants receive appropriate, adequate and safe complementary foods to ensure the right transition from the breastfeeding period to the full use of family foods.

>>Source: WHO



Send Letters to the editor

All readers can post comments on articles and news mentioned in PHP or could be suggestions and compliments.

Send letters to:

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Word limit 150 max. and the title of news or articles of critique.

Email should include letters to the editor in subject line in the email.

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