



health

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CIRCULAR MINUTE NO. 3 OF 2017/18 HIV/AIDS, TB & MCWH

AMENDMENT OF THE 2013 INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING (IYCF) POLICY

The 2013 Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) policy recommendation on the duration of breastfeeding for HIV infected women has been amended to align with the updated 2016 WHO/UNICEF guidelines.

The policy recommendation that HIV-infected women should stop breastfeeding at 12 months is revised. HIV-infected women who are breastfeeding should be supported to adhere to antiretroviral therapy (ART), and should be counselled and supported to exclusively breastfeed their infants for the first 6 months of life, to introduce complementary foods thereafter, and to continue breastfeeding for at least 2 years (pg 14 of the IYCF policy indicating the amendment is attached). This means that infant and young child feeding recommendations for HIV negative and HIV positive mothers are fully aligned. All healthcare workers are reminded of the importance of ensuring that all pregnant and breastfeeding HIV-infected mothers receive ART, together with adherence support.

The remainder of the IYCF policy, which emphasises that breastfeeding should be protected, supported and promoted, remains unchanged.

It would be appreciated if the contents of this circular are communicated to all relevant officials.


DR Y PILLAY
DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: HIV/AIDS, TB & MCWH
DATE: 07/06/17

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3. RECOMMENDED INFANT AND YOUNG CHILD FEEDING PRACTICES

3.1 The main infant and young child feeding recommendations are summarised in the table below.

Main Feeding Recommendation			
HIV-negative women	Exclusively breastfeed their infants during the first 6 months of life.	Introduce adequate, safe and appropriate complementary foods at 6 months	Continue breastfeeding for 2 years or longer.
HIV-positive mothers (and whose infants are HIV uninfected or of unknown HIV status) <u>On lifelong ART</u>			Continue breastfeeding for 12 24 months (recommended) while being fully supported for ART adherence. The infant should receive ARVs from birth until six weeks of age as prescribed in accordance with current PMTCT guidelines.
HIV-positive mothers (and whose infants are HIV uninfected or of unknown HIV status) <u>Not on lifelong ART</u>			Continue breastfeeding for the first 12 24 months of life (recommended) while being fully supported for ART adherence. The mother and/or infant should receive ARVs as prescribed in accordance with current PMTCT guidelines. This should continue for one week after all breastfeeding has stopped.
HIV-positive mothers and whose infants are HIV infected			Continue breastfeeding for 2 years or longer while being fully supported for ART adherence for mother and infant.
			Breastfeeding cessation needs to occur gradually over one month. Abrupt cessation is discouraged.