

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

S U M M A R Y

AND

C O N C L U S I O N

Much controversy is present between the efficiency of breast-feeding and bottle feeding. The present study was undertaken to delineate the difference -if present- in the first five years of age between the physical growth of breast-fed and artificially-fed children for recommendation of the best feeding method during infancy and open up paths for healthier babies.

A cross sectional study was carried out on 600 normal and healthy infants and children from birth up to 5 years selected by systemic random sample from the outpatient clinic of Pediatric Department in Benha, chosen of the same standard.

Cases were classified according to the type of feeding practice into breast-fed, bottle-fed and infants on mixed feeds. A further classification according to sex included age groups of (0-6 months), (6-12 months), (12-18 months), (18-24 months) and

(24-60 months) was done. Each child was subjected to detailed history, complete clinical examination and anthropometrical measurements for weight, length, skull circumference, chest and abdominal circumferences, skin fold thickness, upper arm and mid thigh circumferences.

The results obtained from this study showed that breast feeding is still more prevalent in our country; 49% were breast-fed, 26% were bottle-fed and 25% were on mixed feeds.

Generally, the physical growth of breast-fed infants and children is superior to both mixed and bottle-fed ones during the first five years of life, although the artificially-fed infants gained more weight during the age period (12-24 months).

An apparent significant difference was found between breast feeding and bottle feeding rather than breast and mixed feeding especially in stature, skull circumference, chest circumference and mid thigh circumference. This significance is particularly evident during the age period from birth up to one year then again above two years.

However, there was no significant difference between breast feeding and bottle feeding during the age period

(1-2 years), as shown by weight, length, skin fold thickness and upper arm circumference. This was explained by the tendency to prolonged breast feeding without early introduction of other nutrients causing decrease in the growth rate of these breast-fed infants during this period.

It was remarkable that there was delayed teething in all the three groups attributed to the lack of vitamin D in both types of milk and the lack of medical care offered to our cases.

Next, comparison was done with the Egyptian (Abbassy) and U.S.A. (Harvard) standards and showed that the growth curve of breast-fed group matched the Egyptian and U.S.A. standards while that of artificially-fed groups was far below both standards except for weight during the age period (1-2 years).

It is concluded from this study that breast feeding is more justifiable to artificial feeding for infants up to one year but supplementary feeding is necessary thereafter to maintain optimal growth. It is hoped through this study to encourage breast feeding and emphasize its importance which has been neglected for sometime, untill recently and considered an old

fashioned method for infant feeding and whenever
bottle feeding is unavoidable, mother in developing
countries must be advised to follow the recommended
infant feeding schedules to avoid infant malnutrition.

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