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## Review of Benefits of Breast Feeding and other milks.

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### ABSTRACT:

In Ayurveda the word used for the babies who drink only milk is “*ksheerap*” and the one who drinks milk and eats solids is called as “*ksheer-annad*”. According to different authors, the age group of *ksheerap* and *Ksheer-annad* is different. Since the baby is only fed with milk initially, it becomes a prime issue as to what kind of milk must be given. Amongst the all, the mother’s milk is considered as the best, but here in this article the importance of mothers milk along with its substitute have been mentioned.

**Keywords:-** Breastfeeding, cow’s milk, formula milk, Alternate feeding.

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## INTRODUCTION:

Milk is an important food and is rich in nutrition. Right from the birth milk is served to the baby and is considered as the purest form. According to Acharya *kashyap*, in ancient times just like by churning the *khseer sagar* produced “Amrit” , by drinking which the demons became immortal. Same is the case with milk, it is considered similar to “amrit”<sup>1</sup>. Milk is said to be the life for mammals. The best Milk is mother’s milk. Although mothers milk is easily available, still there are many situations when mothers milk is not available, like when the mother is working, milk production is not sufficient, baby is adopted etc. In such cases what can be given to the baby is a matter of stress to parents which has been discussed here in this article.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A detailed library work has been done for the present review study. In this both modern science and *Ayurvedic* texts have been consulted as a source of references. The chief books referred for ayurvedic references includes *Charak samhita*, *Sushrut samhita*, *Ashtang hridaya* and *Kashyap samhita*. For modern aspects O.P ghai essential pediatrics, and related thesis were referred.

### Importance of mother’s milk<sup>2</sup>

Mothers milk is said to be of the utmost importance for babies. *Acharyas* have mentioned the qualities of mother’s milk as sweet - astringent in taste, heavy, cold in

potency and which gives strength and stability to the body.

#### **According to Acharya charak<sup>3</sup>:**

It is vitalizer , bulk promoting , used in internal hemorrhage, best for eyes.

#### **Breast milk v/s other milks as per classics**

##### **Cows milk<sup>4</sup>.**

Cows milk is said to be sweet, cold , unctuous , viscous , smooth and clear. It increases *ojas* due to the similarities in the characteristics.. Cow milk is considered to be the best vitalizer and *rasayana*.

##### **Buffalo's milk<sup>5</sup>.**

It is heavier and colder than that of cows , because of plenty of fat. It is useful for person suffering from sleeplessness and excessive digestive power.

##### **Goats milk<sup>6</sup>.**

It is astringent, sweet, cold, light, causes constipation, alleviates internal haemorrhage and alleviates the pain in eyes.

##### **Human milk<sup>7</sup>.**

It is a vitalizer , promotes bulk, good for eyes and is used in internal hemorrhage.

##### **In absence of mothers milk<sup>8</sup>.**

In the absence of mothers milk, *dhatris* milk must be given or that of cows or goats milk by adding *laghu panchmula* drugs.

#### **Difference in contents of milk according to modern science.**

##### **Breast Milk<sup>9</sup>.**

The composition of breast milk varies at different stages after birth to suit the needs of the baby. Milk of the mother who has delivered a pre term baby is differently from the milk of mother of term baby.

1. **Colostrum** – secreted during initial 3-4 days after delivery. It contains more antibodies and cells and increases amounts of vit A,D,E,K .
2. **Transitional milk** – Secreted after 3-4 days until 2 weeks. Immunoglobulin and protein content decreases while fat and sugar content increases.
3. **Mature milk** – follows transitional milk. Thinner and watery but contains all nutrients essential for optimal growth of the baby.
4. **Preterm milk** – it contains more proteins, sodium, iron ,

immunoglobulins, calories as they are needed by the preterm baby.

5. **Fore milk** - milk secreted at the start of feed. It is watery and rich in protein, sugar, vitamins, minerals and water that satisfies the babies thirst.
6. **Hind milk** – come later towards the end of feed and richer in fat and provides more energy and satisfies

the baby's hunger. Thus, the composition of milk also varies during the phase of feeding.

For optimal growth of the baby needs both fore and hind milk. The baby should therefore be allowed to empty a breast completely before switching over the other breast

**Table no. 1**

<b>Compound</b>	<b>Human milk(250ml)</b>	<b>Cows milk (250 ml)</b>	<b>Goats milk(250ml)</b>	<b>Buffalo milk(250 ml)</b>	<b>Formula milk 250 ml</b>
Energy (kcal)	172	146	168	236.7	167.5
Protein (g)	2.53	7.86	8.69	9.2	3.75-5.5
Fat (g)	10.77	7.93	10.10	16.8	8.75- 11.25
Calcium	79	276	327	412.4	115-182.5
Phosphorus (mg)	34	222	271	285.5	80-140(gm)
Potassium (mg)	125	349	498	434.3	200
Thiamin (mg)	0.043	0.107	0.117	0.1	1.175
Riboflavin (mg)	0.089	0.447	0.337	0.3	2.5
Niacin (mg)	0.435	0.261	0.676	0.2	2.5
Vit A(iu)	522	249	483	434.31	3.75

## Reasons for low breast milk production<sup>10</sup>.

According to various ancient texts it has been observed that the reasons for low milk production are anger, stress, dieting, fear, pregnancy, lack of affection towards baby.

### According to modern science.

#### Oxytocin reflex (milk ejection reflex)<sup>11</sup>

Oxytocin is a hormone produced by posterior pituitary. It is responsible for contraction of milk from the glands into the lactiferous sinuses and the lactiferous ducts. This hormone is produced in response to stimulus to the nerve endings in the nipple by suckling as well as by the thought, sight or sound of the baby. Since this reflex is affected by the mother's emotions, a relaxed and confident attitude helps the milk ejection reflex. On the other hand, tension and lack of confidence hinders the milk flow.

## DISCUSSION.

There are so many correlations between the *Ayurvedic* and modern science aspects in terms of breast feeding and process of its formation. *Ayurvedic Acharyas* have mentioned human milk to be good for eye diseases which is evident from the fact that

human milk contains maximum amount of vitamin A, which is good for eyes. *Acharya Vagbhat* has mentioned that Goats milk should be the first substitute of human milk. It has been approved by the modern day study that goat's milk is more nutritious than cows milk. Also, the reasons mentioned in classics for low milk production have been said to be accurate if we compare it with the oxytocin reflex mentioned. Since cow's milk contains more amount of protein than mother's milk therefore it can lead to extra load over the kidneys that's why mother's milk is preferred and even if cows milk is given, its given in diluted form.

## CONCLUSION.

Breast milk is the best source of milk for the child. It not only is beneficial for the baby but for the mother as well. W.H.O recommends an exclusive breast feeding for the first 6 months of life.

It has a composition that is ideally tailored to the requirements of a small infant. It is non-allergenic and its secretory IgA provides protection against respiratory and gastrointestinal infections. The mother derives much satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment from nursing her baby

successfully. Breastfeeding also helps in spacing children, slimming by enabling uterus to return to normal size.

Hence, Breast feeding is healthy for both mother and child and must be promoted as much as possible and lactating mothers must be supported by the family, friends and co-workers.

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