

# HOW TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR CHILD

## Preventing Impairment & Disability



Primary Health Package

# Safe motherhood and timing births

- Have your children between the ages of 18 and 35 years old.
  - Space at least 2 years between births.
  - Do not have more than 4 children.
- Get prenatal care at least 4 times during pregnancy.
  - Use folic acid supplements to prevent birth defects.
- Women should be immunised against tetanus and rubella before or during pregnancy.
  - They prevent disease and birth defects.
- Know your HIV & STI status. Correct treatment during pregnancy can keep the mother and baby healthy.
- Get immediate medical attention for fevers.
- Deliver your baby in the presence of a skilled birth attendant.
- Eat a more nutritious diet. A healthy mother = healthy baby.
  - Eat milk products, meat, fish, green leafy vegetables, eggs, beans, peas, orange or yellow fruits and vegetables.
  - Use iodized salt.
- Do not smoke, use drugs, or drink alcohol.
  - They cause birth defects.
- Only take medications which qualified doctors prescribe.

## Question to ask:

**Ask women if they are taking any “over-the-counter” medications.**

**If so, tell them to notify their doctor to prevent possible harm to the baby.**

# Safe motherhood and timing births

Space births



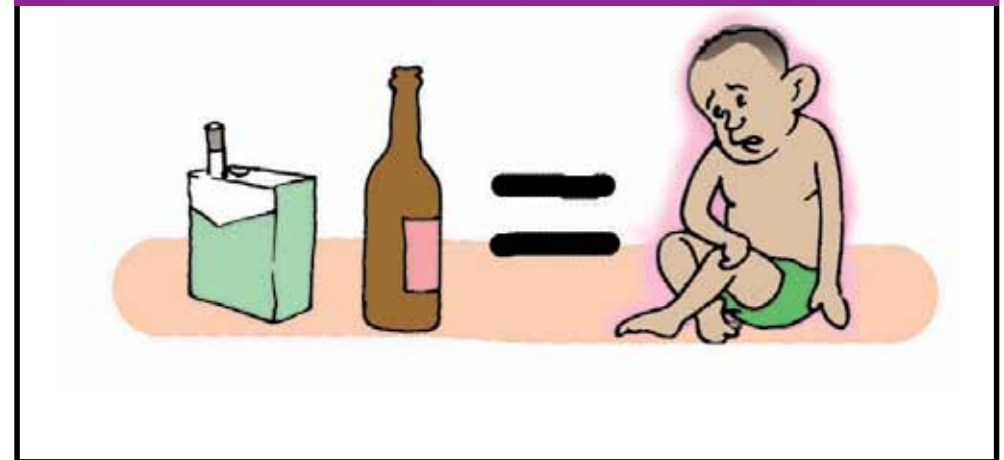
Attend prenatal care



Eat healthily



Drinking alcohol can cause birth defects



# Breastfeeding

- Your baby should have skin-to-skin contact.
- Carry your baby with legs around the body. This helps to prevent dislocation of the hips.
- Begin breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
- Breastfeeding mothers need more nutritious food.
  - Eat milk products, meat, fish, green leafy vegetables, eggs, beans, peas, orange or yellow fruits and vegetables.
  - Use iodized salt.
- Only breastfeed exclusively for the first 6 months.
  - This helps protect against illnesses which can lead to impairments and disability.

## Question to ask:

**What are you feeding your babies during the first 6 months of life?**

# Breastfeeding your child

Only breastfeed exclusively for the first 6 months



Nursing mothers should eat healthy food



Carry the baby on your back with legs around your body



# Child nutrition and growth

- After 6 months, introduce additional foods alongside breastfeeding.
  - Wash food, then mash it to remove any lumps or squeeze it into a juice.
  - Feed your child small meals, 5 times a day.
- Get your child immunised at birth, 6 weeks, 10 weeks, 14 weeks, and at 9 months of age.
  - If available, ask for immunisations against other diseases.
- Your baby should be weighed on a scale at each visit to a health center.
  - This prevents impairments which can lead to disability.
- If a baby is not gaining weight, do not delay in taking the baby to a health center to get the baby checked.
- Children need a variety of food to be healthy. These foods should include eggs, fruits, vegetables, milk, and fish.
- Use iodized salt.

## Question to ask:

**Do you know which local healthy foods you can give to your child to eat?**

# Your growing child

Immunisation prevents impairments and disability



Your baby should be weighed regularly



Include healthy foods after 6 months of age





# Preventing bone deformities

- A bone deformity is often caused by a lack of calcium and vitamin D in the diet.
- Eat foods rich with calcium and vitamin D including: whole small fish, sesame seeds, green leafy vegetables, beans, milk, nuts and figs.
- Sunshine helps make vitamin D. Let your children play outside every day.

**Find out what foods locally available in your area are rich in calcium and vitamin D.**

**Emphasise that children should wear clothes that allow sun on their skin (ie short pants, short-sleeved shirts).**

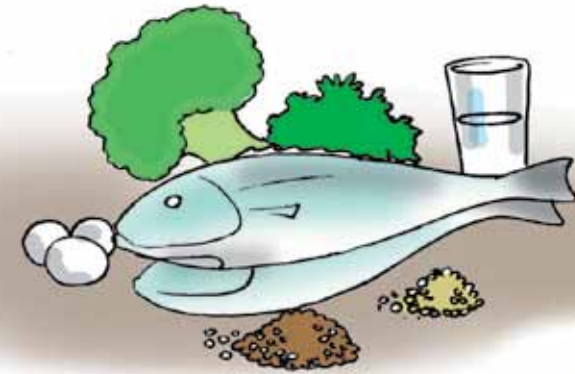


# Preventing bone deformities

Bone deformity can occur from lack of calcium and vitamin D in the diet



Foods rich in calcium



Children should play outside



# Hygiene

- Wash your hands after using the toilet and before eating food.
- Wash your face and your child's face with clean water every day to prevent eye infections.
- Use clean water for drinking.
- Raw food should be washed or cooked (and kept separately).
- Reheat cooked meat thoroughly.
- Store food in covered containers and keep kitchens and utensils clean.
- Keep animals out of the kitchen.

## Group discussion topic:

**Discuss how you can get cleaner water.**

# Cleanliness

Wash hands



Cover food



Keep animals out of the kitchen



# Early development and learning

- Babies should receive affection, attention and stimulation.
- Encourage children to play and explore.
  - Everything your baby sees, touches, tastes, smells or hears helps to shape the brain for thinking, feeling, moving and learning.
- If your child's growth or development is delayed, get your child checked by a trained health worker.

## Question to ask:

**Can you give some examples of a child who has a developmental delay?**

# Your child's development

Talk & Sing



Look at your child



Touch your child and play together



# Malaria

- Prevent malaria by eliminating stagnant water around your homes.
- Always sleep under a treated mosquito net.
- A child with a fever should be tested and treated urgently by a trained health worker.
  - Prevent cerebral malaria which can lead to cerebral palsy.
- Injections are usually not necessary to treat malaria. First try tablets.

## Question to ask:

**How can you eliminate stagnant water near your home?**

# Malaria

Remove stagnant water



Prevent malaria, use treated mosquito nets



Seek medical attention for fevers



Use tablets for malaria on doctor's advice.





# Infections: when to go to the clinic

Rush immediately to the clinic if your child:-

- has diarrhoea and bloody stools,
- has a fever,
- has no energy,
- is convulsing or unconscious,
- is vomiting everything,
- is not able to drink or breastfeed,
- has difficulty breathing or is breathing fast,
- has ear pain, swelling behind the ear, or pus from the ear,
  - Prevent deafness
- has pus from the eye,
  - Prevent blindness

Injections, apart from immunisations, should only be given on the advice of a doctor.

- Prevent post-injection paralysis.

## Question to ask:

**Would you let your local health care provider give your child an injection?**

**Get pills. Injections should only be done by a qualified doctor.**

# Infections: when to go to the clinic

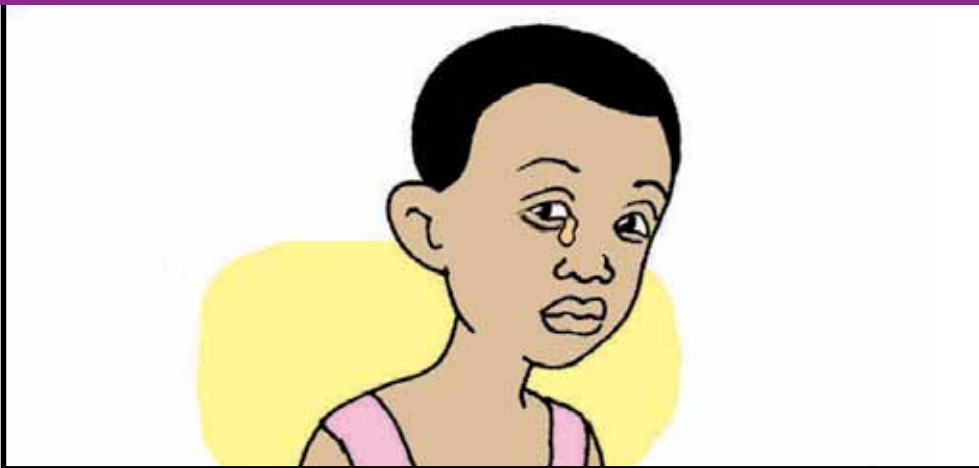
Convulsions



Vomiting everything



Eye or ear pus



Injections only on doctor's advice



# Burn prevention

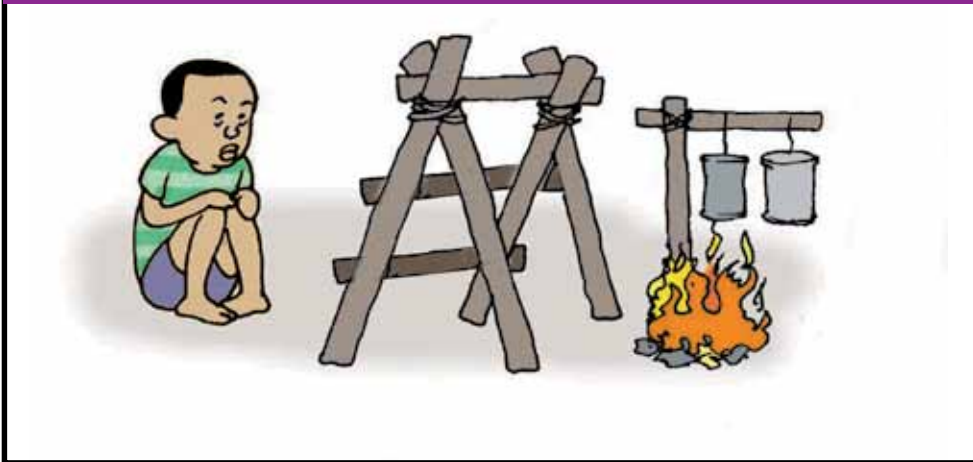
- Keep your child away from fires, cooking stoves, lamps, matches, and electrical appliances.
- Put protective barriers around cooking pots to separate the cooking area from the living area.
- Place cooking surfaces higher than ground level, if possible. Keep pan handles away from children.
- Extinguish lights and flames before falling asleep.
- Even a small burn on a child should be evaluated at a health center.
  - Burns cause impairments which can lead to disability.

## Question to ask:

**How can you change your home to prevent a burn accident from happening?**

# Preventing burns

Keep children away from fire



Put out candles and fires before sleep



Prevent impairment and disability from burns



# Injury prevention and household safety

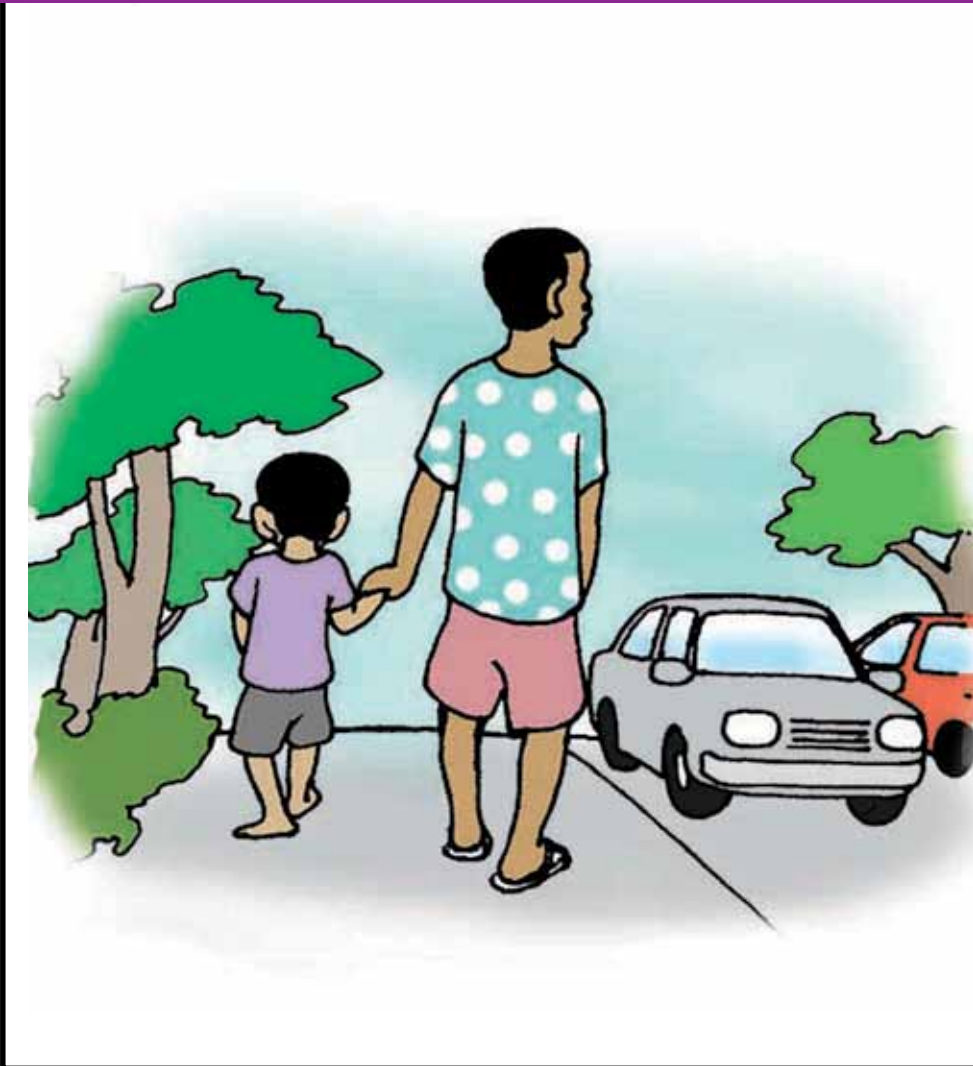
- Store medicines, matches, fuels, poisons, insecticides, bleach, acids, liquid fertilisers, and sharp objects (knives and scissors) out of children's reach.
- Young children should always be supervised on roadways and near water.
- Encourage safe areas for young children to play.
- Prevent children from playing with dangerous objects.

## Question to ask:

**How can you keep your home and community safe for children?**

# Preventing injuries

Watch children on roads



Play in safe areas and avoid playing with sharp objects



# PREVENT DISABILITY IN CHILDREN

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This programme aims to reduce the prevalence of disabilities and mitigate the effects of impairments through improved maternal and newborn care and greater community awareness.

Adapted from 'Facts for Life', Unicef



Changing Lives, Changing Communities



Empowering persons with different abilities

