

BREAST CRAWL: - FIRST CRAWLING TOWARDS LIFE

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“A journey of thousand miles begins with a single step”

Lau Tzu

Abstract

Motherhood is a very precious gift to every woman by almighty God. A mother is the one who nourishes her baby from the beginning of its life. Have you ever seen animals giving birth to their babies? Soon after birth, nobody taught them how and when to breastfeed. Instead, the newborn itself decides it and initiates its first interrupted breastfeed. Have you ever thought about how this happens? It happens because they have an inborn instinct to find their mother's breast and get attached to it. Can you believe the same instinct is present in humans also, known as “Breast Crawl”

Key Words:- Breast Crawl

Introduction

Each infant, when put on the mother's abdomen following birth, can discover its mom's breast all alone and decides itself when to take the first feed. This phenomenon is called Breast Crawl.¹

Breast Crawl is the impulse of mammals (counting human) infants to move towards the areola and connect to it for breastfeeding without help from anyone else. In humans too, if the infant is put on the mother's abdomen, the developments start 12 to 44 minutes after birth, trailed by unconstrained nursing at 27 to 71 minutes after birth.²

It was first depicted in 1987 at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden. Marshall Klaus looked into numerous investigations on Breast Crawl and gave a delightful depiction of Breast Crawl in 1998. The credit for utilizing the word Breast Crawl as a thing interestingly ought to be given to Klaus. The beginning situation for Breast Crawl (nose of infant in mother's bosom, eyes at the level of the areolas) had been determined by Varendi et al in 1996.³

In India, 2007 at 'Grace Maternity Home', Mumbai, Breast Crawl was first tested and proceeded as a technique to initiate early breastfeeding.⁴

Everything in Breast Crawl is completely planned itself by mother nature. The skin-to-skin contact assists the infant with staying warm and protective and starts effective bonding between the two. The kicking of Infant on the mother's abdomen helps the uterus to contract in this manner so that it lessens the draining and improves ejection of the placenta. When the infant smells food nearby, it starts salivating, and arrives at areola and starts breastfeeding without anyone else's help.⁵ This is the beauty of Breast Crawl.

Process of Breast Crawl

Following delivery, if the baby is healthy and breathing well, should be dried meticulously excluding its hands. Then show the baby to the mother, keep both of them in a close proximity so that the mother can easily see the baby. Afterwards put the baby in a prone position between the mother's breasts. Both the mother's and infant's chest ought to be kept bare facilitating the infant's full skin-to-skin contact with the mother. Both the mother and baby should be covered with a cloth. Small kicks from the infant will produce delicate firm jerks to the belly invigorating it to contract which assists with the expulsion of the placenta and in this manner lessens hemorrhage. Once the baby recognizes that food is very close to it, it starts salivating. The odor of the mother's breast drives the baby towards the mother's breast which is identical to the odor of amniotic fluid inside the womb. Nipple massage with its tiny fingers triggers release of maternal oxytocin and thus helps to reduce blood loss and prevent anemia. After touching the breast the baby starts making mouthing movements. The amniotic fluid present on the baby's hand guides it to reach to the nipples. As soon as the baby reaches the mother's nipples, it raises its head and is attached to the nipples with its mouth open wide. Until the baby finished the first breast feed the skin-to-skin contact should not be interrupted.⁶

Stages of Breast Crawl:- Infants go through nine particular stages after birth inside the principal first hour.⁷

- ❖ Birth cry:- Intense crying soon after birth
- ❖ Relaxing stage:- Infant resting and recuperating. No movement of mouth, head, arms, legs or body.
- ❖ Arousing stage:- Infant starts to give indications of action. Little pushes of head: up, down, from side-to-side. Little developments of appendages and shoulders.
- ❖ Active stage:- Infant moves appendages and head, is more decided in developments. Establishing movement, 'pushing' with appendages without moving body
- ❖ Crawling stage:- 'Pushing' which brings about moving body
- ❖ Resting stage:- Infant rests, with some movement, for example, mouth action, sucks close by
- ❖ Acquaintance:- Infant has arrived at areola/nipple with mouth situated to brush and lick areola/nipple.
- ❖ Sucking stage:- Infant has taken areola in mouth and begins nursing
- ❖ Sleeping stage:- The infant has shut its eyes. Mother may likewise nod off

The breast crawl is related to an assortment of tangible, central, motor and neuro-endocrine segments, all straightforwardly assisting the child with moving and working with her endurance in the new world. The advantages gathered from the regular practice are Multitudinous, the most significant being a critical decrease in mortality, grimness Furthermore, ailing health among the infant.

Benefits of Breast Crawl

Early initiation of breastfeeding through Breast Crawl offers several advantages to the baby and the mother.⁸

For Baby:-

- It helps to keep the baby warm.
- It Improves faster and effective feeding skills by the baby.
- The baby starts getting colostrum at the first feed. Colostrum has high concentration of antibodies (immunity)
- Baby starts getting colonized by safe germs (bacterial flora) from the mother.
- Better sugar levels and other biochemical parameters in the first few hours of birth.
- Earlier passage of meconium and hence decreased intensity of normal (physiological) newborn jaundice.
- Early and long term breastfeeding success.
- Better mother-infant bonding.

For Mother:-

- Helps uterine contraction.
- faster expulsion of the placenta.
- reduces maternal blood loss and prevents anaemia.

Dos and Don'ts for success of the Breast Crawl⁹

For the Mother

- Use drugs for work absence of pain prudently.
- Do not wash/wipe the breast or nipples prior to first breastfeed.
- Raise mother's head on a cushion to work with mother-infant visual contact.
- Do not move mother out of the labour room until accomplishment of the first breastfeed.

For the Baby

- An infant who has cried well doesn't require oro-nasal suctioning.
- Dry the child altogether with the exception of the hands.
- Do not pass orogastric /nasogastric tube or do gastric suction as a daily practice.
- Cover the infant and the mother with linen or cloth, so they should be warm while proceeding with skin-to-skin contact.
- Delay the infusion of Vit. K, Weighing, anthropometric measurements, routine estimating, and dressing (wrapping) till the first breastfeed is achieved.
- Baby bathing is best deferred to the past 24 hours.
- Continue the principal skin-to-skin contact till fulfilment of the first breastfeed.

Conclusion

Breast Crawl is the most normal, evidence based,⁹ unconstrained and intelligent strategy for instating early breastfeeding. It is a least complex technique that gives uninterrupted skin-to-skin contact. It is simple, doesn't need elaborate and costly arrangements,

should be possible in any setting, and is promptly reproducible. It's not only helpful in promoting early breastfeeding but also in controlling maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity.

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