

### 4.0 Breastfeeding

#### 4.03 Contraindications to Exclusive Breastfeeding

**PURPOSE:** To clarify the rare exceptions when exclusive breastfeeding should not be recommended or when modifications to breastfeeding must be assessed.

#### A. POLICY

1. Families should be counseled that breastfeeding is NOT advisable if one or more of the following conditions are present:
  - a. An infant diagnosed with galactosemia.
  - b. A client who is:
    - i. Infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
      - (a.) WIC staff shall:
        - (i.) Advise pregnant clients to know their HIV status.
        - (ii.) Provide referrals to local HIV testing and counseling services.
        - (iii.) Advise clients not to breastfeed.
        - (iv.) Provide information on donor milk options.
      - ii. Infected with human T-cell lymphotropic virus type I or type II (HLTV-I, II)
      - iii. Receiving prescription medication from the following classes of substances:
        - (a.) chemotherapy agent;
        - (b.) amphetamine;
        - (c.) ergotamine;
        - (d.) statin.
      - iv. Taking medications that contain codeine or tramadol.
2. Modifications to breastfeeding should be assessed if one or more of the following conditions are present in a client who is:
  - a. Living with untreated, active tuberculosis or brucellosis.
    - i. Client/infant separation is required until two full weeks of treatment have been completed.
    - ii. Infant may safely consume expressed breast milk during separation period.
  - b. Living with an active herpes lesion or open sore on breast. Client may breastfeed from the unaffected side.

#### B. GUIDANCE

1. Maternal Substance Misuse
  - a. Breastfeeding clients are discouraged from using alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs since most of these substances are transmitted to human breast milk, although the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) policy statement, "Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk" concludes that maternal substance abuse is not a categorical contraindication to breastfeeding. Maternal feeding decisions require careful consideration on an individual basis.
  - b. Phencyclidine (PCP), cocaine, and heroin can be detected in human milk and their use by breastfeeding clients is contraindicated because of their effect on the infant's long-term

neurobehavioral development.

- c. Insufficient data is available on the impacts of marijuana use during breastfeeding. Breastfeeding mothers should be counseled to reduce or eliminate their use of marijuana. This includes both medicinal and recreational marijuana.
  - d. Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) with methadone or buprenorphine is safe to use while breastfeeding. Women on stable doses of methadone maintenance should be encouraged to breastfeed, if desired.
2. Blood Lead Levels (BLL)
- a. Feeding decisions in the face of maternal elevated lead levels require careful consideration on a case-by-case basis.
  - b. Health care providers should have access to lead levels of mother and baby, when applicable, and use them to carefully weigh the risks of exposure to the significant risk of not breastfeeding. (See Policy 6.04, Lead Services)

### References:

- Academy of BF Medicine protocol ABM Clinical Protocol #21: Guidelines for Breastfeeding and Substance Use or Substance Use Disorder, Revised 2015.
- American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement *Breastfeeding and the Use of Human Milk*, 2012.
- American Academy of Pediatrics Policy Statement *Marijuana Use During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding: Implications for Neonatal and Childhood Outcomes*, 2018.
- American Academy of Pediatrics Clinical Report *The Transfer of Drugs and Therapeutics into Human Breast Milk: An Update on Selected Topics*, 2013.
- Food and Nutrition Standards (FNS) document Substance Use Prevention: Screening, Education, and Referral Resource Guide for Local WIC Agencies, September 2013.
- Hale, T.W. (2019) Medications and Mothers' Milk. Spring Publishing Company.
- US National Library of Medicine. (2006). Drugs and lactation database (LactMed).
- Michigan Risk Code 211 Elevated Blood Lead Levels: [https://miwic-prod.state.mi.us/MIWICP/Clinic/WebForms/Help/Risk/Risk\\_Help.pdf](https://miwic-prod.state.mi.us/MIWICP/Clinic/WebForms/Help/Risk/Risk_Help.pdf)
- Nutrition Services Standards, USDA, August 2013: [https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/WIC\\_Nutrition\\_Services\\_Standards.pdf](https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/WIC_Nutrition_Services_Standards.pdf)
- USDA WIC Breastfeeding Policy and Guidance, July 2016: [https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/WIC-Breastfeeding-Policy-and-Guidance\\_1.pdf](https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/WIC-Breastfeeding-Policy-and-Guidance_1.pdf)

### Cross-References:

- 6.04 Lead Services