

# BREASTFEEDING AWARENESS WEEK



**THEME: INVEST IN BREASTFEEDING, INVEST IN THE FUTURE**

## What is Breastfeeding?

Feeding an infant with breast milk – recommended to begin within 1 hour of birth and continue exclusively for 6 months, with breastfeeding up to at least 2 years

In India, exclusive breastfeeding rate stands at 64% (NFHS-5), but early initiation (within 1 hour) is only ~42%.

## Why It Matters (Benefits)

### For Babies:

- Reduces risk of diarrhea, pneumonia, ear infection
- Boosts immunity through colostrum antibodies
- Promotes cognitive development and higher IQ

### For Mothers:

- Lowers risk of breast & ovarian cancers, type 2 diabetes
- Speeds postpartum recovery and birth spacing
- Supports emotional bonding and reduces postpartum depression

### For Society & Environment:

- Zero waste, low carbon footprint compared to formula
- Saves national healthcare costs and builds healthier future workforce

## Pharmacists Role

💊 Medication Use During Breastfeeding

🟢 Safe:

Paracetamol, Ibuprofen, Iron, Calcium, Domperidone, Most antibiotics (under guidance)

🔴 Caution:

Antipsychotics, Radioactive meds, Cytotoxics, Certain antivirals

💡 **Tip: LactMed App or [www.e-lactancia.org](http://www.e-lactancia.org) can be used to verify medicine safety during lactation.**

## ⚖️ Common Myths vs Facts

❌ “Mothers with fever or cough should stop feeding”

✅ Continue breastfeeding – antibodies help the baby!

❌ “Low milk means formula is better”

✅ Frequent feeding boosts supply – avoid top-up feeds early on

❌ “Colostrum should be discarded”

✅ It's liquid gold – rich in antibodies and nutrition