



28 December 2012

Association of Hong Kong Nursing Staff

*“Hong Kong Code of Marketing and Quality of Formula Milk and Related Products,
and Food Products for Infants & Young Children”*

To ensure the provision of safe, good and adequate nutrition to the infants and young children as well as to uphold health promotion, breastfeeding is encouraged to attain this goal and this practice is beneficial to both mothers and infants.

Though breastfeeding undoubtedly brings advantages to both mothers and infants, the following special circumstances should be given with due consideration for the wellbeing of the infants and mothers:

- Newborn babies in NICU who are suffered from illness would require additional nutrients to support their life but may find hard to absorb enough nutrition from breastfeeding. The situation may worsen when mothers are unable to deliver adequate nutrition to their children. Formula milk can supplement breastfeeding in this respect.
- Mothers are unable to produce sufficient mother’s milk due to some reasons such as work pressure. Nowadays, most females are career oriented. Mothers will be fully occupied by their jobs, their babies and families, etc. after resuming work. Immense work pressure and insufficient resting time result in negative impact on effectiveness of breastfeeding. To soothe the problems, alternatives should be given to mothers for feeding their babies with formula milk.

There is no doubt that health care professionals such as doctors / nurses / midwives have to receive the correct information of formula milk so as to well understand the ingredients of the product, as they would be the one who will give the professional advices and suggestions to mothers. Furthermore, the scientific and factual research on the products should be provided by manufacturers. Department of Health / Maternal and Child Health Centres play a major role in monitoring the

exaggerative advertising reflection from manufacturers by uniting the details and accurate information given by them.

Association of Hong Kong Nursing Staff would advocate breastfeeding being the first choice for the infants. The Hong Kong Code covering the promotion, labeling and composition of food products will be the guidelines to the manufacturers and distributors on the marketing and quality of formula milk and food products. However, to facilitate the real living environment in Hong Kong and to alleviate mothers' burden as mentioned above, breastfeeding to infants aged 24 months or below would be regarded as adequate, and information on formula milk should not be totally abandoned. In addition, to promote breastfeeding, the public facilities should be improved in the community.



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