

Government of Odisha
Department of Women & Child Development and Mission Shakti
Letter No /WCD dated.

From,
Aravind Agarwal, IAS
Director, ICDS & SW

To,
All Collectors

Sub:COVID- 19: Monitoring of key interventions onmaternal health & nutrition, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices, management of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and conduct ofVHSND & immunization.

Madam/Sir,

You are aware that, the state machinery is geared up, since early last month, for containing the spread of COVID-19with all it`s capacity. Following decision on extention of closure of Anganwadi Centres(AWCs)across the state till 30.04.2020,provision of nutrition at the households of beneficiaries(children between 6 months-6 years and pregnant & nursing women) under Supplementary Nutrition Programme(SNP), for the month of April,2020, must have been completedby now,in compliance of instructions contained in this Department letter No 5060/WCDMS dated 23.03.2020.

2. Besides consumption of nutrition by the targettedbeneficiaries,it must be ensured thatmaternal health, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices, management of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and conduct of VHSND & immunization are monitored so that, the momentum, gathered on nutrition front over the last few years, is not reversed. A few key interventions, necessary for pregnant & nursing women and children below six years, at this juncture, are delineated as below,

2.1 Pregnant women:Pregnant womenare to be sensitized on precautions to be take for COVID-19 and to report possible symptoms (including fever, cough or difficulty in breathing) to the concerned ASHA/AWW. They must continue to take

proper &adequate nutrition since a healthy diet boosts immunity &resists infections.(Annexure-1)

2.2 Nursing mothers: Breastfeeding is very effective against infectious diseases. It strengthens the immune system by transferring antibodies from the mother the child. Nursing mothers,infected with COVID-19 or showing symptoms(including fever, cough or difficulty in breathing),may continue breastfeeding with precautions to prevent infections. They must, however, availimmediate medical care.(Annexure-2)

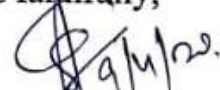
2.3 SAM children: SAM children, with complications, must be referred to the nearest Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres(NRCs) by the local MO/ANM.Follow-ups,must also be monitored at the household level, through ASHAs & AWWs.(Annexure-3)

2.4 Village Health, Sanitation &Nutrition Days (VHSNDs)/Immunisation:VHSND and immunization must continue as per micro plans. It must, however, beensured that, attendance is regulated in a staggeredmanner in order to maintain social distancing and hygiene protocols. After every use,equipments such as weighing scales, thermometersmust be sanitized. The beneficiaries,attending the session, must wash hands with soap & water.Those, with fever, cold, cough & flu like symptoms,areto be attended to at the household level.(Annexure-4)

Instructions of the Mission Directorate,National Health Mission(NHM), under H&FW Department, may be referred on continuance of VHSND & fixed immunization day, as contained in their letter No 3344 dated 25.03.2020 and suspension of such activities in different areas as contained in their letter No 3496 dated 31.03.2020,and in areas to be decided by the Govt for suspension from time to time. (Copies enclosed).

3.Further,there has to be wider publicity,in the community, on the State Helplines(104 / 9439994857 / 9439994859) for COVID19 related queries.

Yours faithfully,



Director, ICDS & SW

Memo No /WCDMS Dated

Copy forwarded to the DSWOs for information & necessary action. They are to ensure that, the above instructions are scrupulously followed and that, all the stakeholders are intimated timely about the same.


Director, ICDS & SW

Memo No /WCDMS Dated

Copy forwarded to the MD,NHM for kind information & necessary action. She is requested to kindly get the above components incorporated into the COVID-19 training modules for FLWs.


Director, ICDS & SW

Memo No /WCDMS Dated

Copy forwarded to the Principal Secretary to Govt., H & FW Department for kind information.


Director, ICDS & SW

Annexure 1: Nutrition in Pregnancy during COVID 19 Pandemic

1. At present there is no evidence that pregnant women are at higher risk of COVID-19 compared to the general population, thus, pregnant women must take the same precautions to avoid COVID-19 infection as other people and report possible symptoms (including fever, cough or difficulty in breathing) to their healthcare provider
2. Nutrition recommendations for pregnant women remain unchanged, even during COVID:
 - Eat atleast three main meals, with one nutritious snack (in first trimester) and two nutritious snacks in the second and third trimester).
 - Each meal must comprise one item from energy giving foods (cereals, fats and sugar), body building (pulses and legumes, nuts, milk and milk products, eggs, meat, fish and poultry) and protective foods (vegetables and fruits)
 - Continue daily dose of micronutrient supplements (iron and calcium)
 - Check status and seek appropriate advice for low/high gestational weight gain and severe anemia during antenatal visit
 - Stay hydrated (Drink at least 8-10 glasses of water or fluids per day)
 - Take rest for 2 hours in the day and sleep for 8 hours at night
 - Do atleast 20-25 minutes of physical activity every day
 - Intake of caffeine, alcohol, tobacco and other addictive substances should be restricted. They are harmful for the baby and also negatively influence immunity
3. Most important precaution to exercise here in addition to respiratory hygiene, is maintaining hygiene while purchasing, cooking and storing food by self and food handlers at home
4. Pregnant women can continue to eat non-vegetarian food and egg. It does not increase risk of acquiring COVID-19 infection. Precaution is to be exercised to ensure non-vegetarian food is thoroughly cooked
5. No food can be designated as a super food to prevent or cure CoVID in pregnancy. Although several foods rich in antioxidant nutrients (Vitamin C, Vitamin E and Vitamin A), Iron, Protein, Zinc and Selenium and omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids boost immunity. These include:

Dark green leafy vegetables	amaranth leaves, fenugreek leaves spinach
Vitamin C rich foods	lemon, amaranth leaves, orange, melon gooseberries (amla)
Yellow-orange fruits &vegetables	carrot, papaya, mango

Nuts and seeds	almonds, walnuts, coconut (dry), gingelly seeds, safflower seeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, flaxseeds, chia seeds, poppy seeds, niger seeds, mustard seeds
Millets	bajra, ragi, jowar
Whole pulses and legumes	bengal gram (whole), horse gram (whole), greengram (whole), rajma, soyabean
Egg & Non-Veg	meat, chicken, fish and egg
Milk and milk products	curd, paneer
Omega 3&6 fatty acids rich oil	safflower oil, sunflower oil, corn oil, soybean oil etc
Herbs, spices and condiments	garlic, ginger, black pepper, turmeric, cloves, basil/Tulsi

6. Pregnancy itself is a stage of psychological and physiological stress. Fear and anxiety due to COVID-19 outbreak coupled with the body's state, can become overwhelming and cause strong emotions. Additionally, folate, vitamin B₆, vitamin B₁₂ and Docosa hexanoic acid (DHA) a fatty acid is vital for foetal brain development, optimal levels of neurotransmitters (serotonin and dopamine) - which play a role in mood, anxiety and sleep, energy levels and appetite. Hence, ensuring that pregnant woman eats foods rich in these nutrients is vital:

omega-3 fatty acid	fish or marine sources, flaxseeds, walnuts
folic acid	fish, rajma, soyabean, spinach, field beans, mustard leaves, beetroot and mango ripe
vitamin B₁₂	milk, egg, chicken, salmon
vitamin B₆	Rohu fish, sunflower seeds, drumstick leaves, walnut, black gram whole, banana, lentil-whole, french beans

7. While at present there is no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with the transmission of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), it may be possible that people can become infected by touching a surface or object contaminated by the virus and then touching their face. Maintain extra precautions for food hygiene while purchasing, cooking and storing food by self and food handlers at home

Annexure 2: Promotion of IYCF during CoVID pandemic

1. Breastfeeding protects newborns from getting sick and also helps protect them throughout their infancy and childhood
2. Breastfeeding is particularly effective against infectious diseases because it strengthens the immune system by directly transferring antibodies from the mother
3. Considering the benefits of breastfeeding and the insignificant role of breastmilk in the transmission of the respiratory viruses, mother with symptoms of or infected with CoVID-19 can breastfeed with precautions to prevent infections
4. All breastfeeding mothers who have symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing, should seek medical care early, and follow instructions of the health care provider
5. Mothers with symptoms of COVID or infected with COVID can safely breastfeed with following precautions
 - *Use a mask when near the child including while feeding*
 - *Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water before and after contact with the child including feeding.*
 - *Routinely cleaning/disinfecting any surface they touch by cleaning with soap or sanitizer*
6. If mother is too ill to breastfeed, she can express her milk and feed it to the child with a cup or spoon
7. While expressing breastmilk the mother should wash hands with soap and water, collect milk in a container washed with soap and water
8. While feeding expressed breast milk the mother should follow all the precautions to prevent infections
9. If mother is too unwell to breastfeed or express breastmilk, she should explore the possibility wet nursing (another woman breastfeeding or caring for your child) or using donor human milk or restarting breastfeeding after a gap
10. Mothers should continue breastfeeding should the infant or young child become sick with suspected, probable, or confirmed COVID-19 or any other illness

11. Caregivers should start complementary foods along with breast milk on completion of 6 months. At this age, a baby's rapid growth of body and brain requires more energy and nutrients than what breast milk alone can provide
12. Delay in introduction of complementary foods affects the child's physical and brain growth and increases the risk of malnutrition. Feed the child a variety of foods such as pulses, milk and milk products, yellow, orange and green vegetables and fruits to support the child's physical growth and brain development. Children have a small stomach, therefore make every bite of food count
13. Due to lock down, if access to fresh produce is difficult, identify healthy food options to replace fresh produce, limit highly processed foods that are typically high in saturated fat, free sugars and salt, and avoid sugary drinks
14. Wash hands with soap and water before cooking, feeding and eating. Also wash child's hands with soap and water before feeding
15. Feed the child from a separate bowl. Use a properly cleaned bowl and spoon to feed the child
16. Feed children usual amount of foods and fluids more often during illness

17. Key messages for health workers/ AWWs

1. In health facilities, infants born to mothers with suspected, probable, or confirmed COVID-19 should be fed according to standard infant feeding guidelines, while applying the necessary hygiene precautions
2. Breastfeeding counselling, basic psychosocial support, and practical feeding support should be provided to all pregnant women and mothers with infants and young children, whether they or their infants and young children have suspected, probable or confirmed COVID-19
3. Health facility staff should ensure that mother and infant remain together, and practice skin-to-skin contact especially straight after birth to establish breastfeeding, whether or not the mother or child has suspected, probable, or confirmed COVID-19
4. Health facility staff should not promote breastmilk substitutes, feeding bottles, teats, pacifiers or dummies in any part of your facilities, or by any of your staff

Annexure 3: Management of severe acute malnutrition in children during CoVID pandemic

1. Intensify the public awareness, protection, promotion and support of appropriate and safe feeding for all breastfed and non-breastfed children and use all opportunities to include hygiene messages, key messages on COVID-19 symptoms, and Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) measures
2. Children who are identified as severe acute malnourished requiring facility-based care (illness or related complications) need to be referred to the nutrition rehabilitation centres using health referral facilities
3. At the NRCs children may be provided the required health services observing hygiene protocols and physical distancing (1 mt) norms
4. Any child who is currently undergoing treatment at the NRC should not be discharged back to the community without getting cured; similarly, any child who has been cured should be discharged back to the community using health transport facilities
5. Follow-ups can be conducted over phone; physical visits should be discouraged as far as possible

Annexure 4: VHSND and immunization services during COVID pandemic(Ref: M.D. NHM- Letter No: 3344 Dt 25.3.2020; Director WCD Letter No.4857 Dt. 18.3.2020; M.D. NHM- Letter No: 3344 Dt 25.3.2020)

Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition days(VHSND) will be conducted every Tuesday and Friday as per health microplans. It must however be ensured that the community is informed beforehand to come to the Anganwadi Centre in a staggered manner to avoid overcrowding and observing physical distancing. During the VHSND, necessary checkups and counselling of pregnant women, weighing of underweight children, referrals will take place

Growth monitoring activities will help the workers identify the most vulnerable children (SUW, SAM). However, after every use of weighing scale, thermometer etc. such equipment shall be adequately sanitized.

The beneficiary coming for the session, must clean hands with soap and water and observe necessary physical distancing

Beneficiaries with fever, cold, cough and flu like symptoms should be persuaded not to come to the session and to remain indoors with requisite precautions

Routine Immunization will take place every Wednesday without interruption. The precautional measures (physical distancing, staggered attendance and hygiene, has to be put in place to ensure that Anganwadi Centre do not get crowded.

ASHAs to ensure mobilization of beneficiaries in phased manner to avoid gathering

Beneficiaries coming for session must clean hands with soap before entering the session site

Beneficiaries with fever, cold, cough and flu like symptoms shall be discouraged to come to the session site and they should be monitored regularly

ANM shall clean her hands with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer after providing services to each beneficiary. ANM shall use face mask during the session

Adequate sanitizer shall be provided to the ANM for sanitizing weighing scale, thermometers other equipments after every use

ANM shall sensitize the beneficiaries on the preventive measures of COVID-19

Urban Health and Nutrition Days (UHND)- The fixed day Immunization sessions and UHND in Bhubaneswar/ Cuttack/ Rourkela/ Berhampur/ Sambalpur Bhubaneswar Urban has been suspended for the lockdown period. All the field functionaries i.e. Medical Officer I/C, Cold Chain handlers, Vaccinators and other frontline workers has been informed accordingly. The children due for vaccination shall be enlisted by the ANMs to ensure vaccination after the discontinuance period is over to ensure no child is left unvaccinated. However, birth dose vaccination for institutional deliveries should be continued uninterruptedly as these beneficiaries are already in the health facility. The re continuance of the fixed day immunization session & UHND will be intimated based on the pandemic situation in the due course of time.