



Ontario Breastfeeding Committee Newsletter

Volume 3: # 4: December 2004

Vitamin D supplement recommendations released by Health Canada

Recently the recommendations for Health Canada regarding the supplementation of breastfed infants with Vitamin D were released. The recommendation is that

"Vitamin D supplements are recommended in Canada at a level of 400IU/day(10ug/d) for all breastfed, full term infants. Supplementation should begin at birth and continue until the child's diet includes at least 200IU/day (5ug/d) of vitamin D from other dietary sources".

The Ontario Breastfeeding Committee originally made submission to Health Canada during the previous consultations about this recommendation. The stance at that time was that according to the research there could not be found any evidence that supplementation benefited those children not seen as at risk for vitamin D deficiency. The existing research on the topic of vitamin D supplementation is very scarce. In the evidence that can be found about the morbidity caused by vitamin D deficiency, it is apparent that most cases are limited to those children who have inadequate sunlight for their skin colour, so that overwhelmingly in most cases poor outcomes were limited to those children who had a dark skin pigment and also were receiving inadequate amounts of sunlight in northern climates in winter months.

To date there have been no trials that have given results indicating that all breastfeeding infants need supplementary vitamin D at 400IU/day from birth.

Explanatory statements to the recommendations made by Health Canada say it is not practical or cost effective to screen all mothers and infants for vitamin D deficiency. Is this in fact? Most infants are seen by a family physician 48 hours after birth. Assuming that some populations are more at risk for vitamin D deficiency would it not be prudent to advise them of their special need for vitamin D at that time? Most infants are advised of immunization schedules as a routine. Why would the ability to screen for risk factors for vitamin D deficiency be any different?

Alarmingly breastmilk is being presented to the public as having insufficient amounts of vitamin D by the drug industry. The lack of sunlight is not seen as the true cause for vitamin D deficiency which is a truer interpretation of the problem when it does exist for those segments of the population at risk.

The cost of vitamin D drops may be too high for some families and the approach taken to supplement infants rather than educate caregivers leaves those families with no effective ways of preventing vitamin D deficiency or of knowing whether they are at particular risk.

The OBC hopes for needed research in the following areas to further clarify recommendations and their usefulness in preventing vitamin D deficiency while promoting and protecting breastfeeding:

- ◆ Further studies on the safety and efficacy of high dose vitamin D in pregnancy and lactation
- ◆ Further research studies to determine optimal vitamin D intakes for pregnant and lactating women as a function of **latitude and race**.
- ◆ Surveillance of current practices related to vitamin D supplementation correlated with vitamin D levels in infants.
- ◆ Retrospective studies of infants not supplemented with vitamin D to discover ill effects .

Lori Levere.

In This Issue:

1. Vitamin D supplement recommendations released by Health Canada
2. OBC gets a new executive for 2005
3. Breastfeeding Challenge October 2nd. 2004
4. Step 5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they should be separated from their infants.
5. OBC Membership Renewal Form



***What's happening in Ontario?
We want to hear from you!***

Please send us news of your activities or tell us about your challenges/victories on the road to becoming Baby Friendly (real names and places can be excluded) so we may network and learn from each other.

We would also like to know what is happening in breastfeeding promotion in all parts of Ontario. We would like this to be your newsletter to communicate the great work which is happening throughout the province.

Contact: marcia.annamunthodoallen@york.ca or
Tel: 905-762-1282 ext 4679

OBC AGM

OBC gets a new executive for 2005

The OBC Annual General Meeting was held on Friday, October 15, 2004 after the Peter Hartmann conference sponsored by Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre. The new executive for 2005 is Kathy Venter as chair, Lori Levere as chair-elect, Mara Celmins for public relations and Donna Zukiwiski as the treasurer. OBC thanks Joyce Ridge for stepping in and taking over the chair position when needed in the middle of the year. Joyce has devoted many hours of her time and much energy to OBC and we all appreciate her hard work. She is a hard act to follow but we are sure that Kathy is up to job. Marcia Annamunthodo Allen has assumed responsibility for the newsletter. This is a new and exciting challenge. We extend our many thanks to Kathy for all her hard work putting the past newsletters together and sending them out on time. She has set a high standard to be followed.

OBC would also like to send a huge thank you to Lori Levere for generously donating a framed painting (shown below) which she designed and painted herself for a raffle at the Peter Hartmann conference. The lucky winner of the raffle was Jennifer Hernandez of McMaster. Congratulations Jennifer!



***"Step-by-Step, Day-by-Day
...that's the Baby Friendly way"***

The Ten Steps and Practice Outcome Indicators For Baby-Friendly™ Hospitals provide detailed information about implementation of each of the 10 Steps. We continue to include excerpts and encourage further perusal of this essential document.

Step 5. Show mothers how to breastfeed and how to maintain lactation, even if they should be separated from their infants.

This step encompasses two circumstances:

- I. Initiation and establishment of breastfeeding of infants rooming in with their mothers
- II. Initiation and maintenance of lactation if mother and baby are separated

According to the Indicators:

“ **Postpartum mothers** (from a random sample of all mothers including those with caesarean deliveries, at least 80%) report

- nursing staff offered further assistance with breastfeeding within six hours of delivery.

These mothers (at least 80% of those breastfeeding)

- demonstrate correct positioning and latch of their own babies
- report that they were shown how to express their milk or given written information on expression and/or advised where they could get help, should they need it.

Staff on duty on maternity units (from a random sample, at least 80%)

- report that they teach mothers positioning/latch
- report that they teach mothers techniques for hand expression of breastmilk.
- demonstrate correct teaching of positioning/latch with one mother on the unit.
- describe an acceptable technique for hand expressing breastmilk that they teach to mothers.”

For information or to obtain copies of the Ten Steps and Practice Outcome Indicators For Baby-Friendly™ Hospitals contact Marilyn Sanders BCC at bfc.can@sympatico.ca

Further information and support is available from:
the BCC at bfc.can@sympatico.ca
or the OBC via kventer1@cogeco.ca

World Breastfeeding Week 2004

“Exclusive Breastfeeding: the Gold Standard-- safe, sound and sustainable”

We would like to hear from you as to how you celebrated WBW 2004. By sharing your efforts, others will get ideas for WBW 2005. Please send your event summaries to: Marcia Annamunthodo Allen at marcia.annamunthodoallen@york.ca and your ideas will be included in the next newsletter.

More information about WBW events and ideas is available on the WABA website at: <http://www.waba.org.my/wbw/wbw04/wbw2004.html>

The 4th. Breastfeeding Challenge - October 2nd. 2004

The Quintessence Challenge is for the **most children breastfeeding** at 11am on October 2, 2004 in one province or territory or state in Canada or the United States or other country based on the birth rate. In order to enable all provinces/territories/states to have a chance, the final numbers will be worked out as a percentage of live births divided into four categories (based on birth rates). Gold, silver and bronze designations for the “winners” were awarded. According to the Quintessence Foundation website, Ontario came in second in category A regions for more than 50,000 births per year. In addition, the second largest site was Ottawa with 81 participants. Ontario had the most number of participating sites with 31 and was the second largest number of participating babies with 516 in total. Congratulations to all who organized and facilitated the challenge at the sites and congratulations to all who participated. We did great!!

For more complete results, please see the Quintessence Foundation site at: <http://www.babyfriendly.ca>

It is time to renew your OBC membership

It is that time of the year again when membership fees are due. Please complete the attached membership form and send your payment to the address indicated on the form. Your fees are very important as it allows OBC to continue to support you in the work you do in your communities with breastfeeding families.

Coming in 2005

2005 promises to be an exciting year for OBC. Some of us have been working on a logic model for OBC which will guide our initiatives. Once the logic model is completed it will be communicated to OBC members.

Two OBC members participated in an ILCA/Ambassador Programs People to People trip to South Africa in November 2004. Stay tuned for their submission and impressions of their trip.

WBW 2005 promises to be even better than this year. We can increase our numbers from the breastfeeding challenge!

Happy Holidays

The Ontario Breastfeeding Committee:

The Provincial Contact for the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada –the National Authority for the WHO/UNICEF Baby Friendly™ Hospital Initiative in Ontario.

For information contact:

Kathy Venter: Communications and Public Relations,
2915 Headon Forest Drive, Suite 8,
Burlington ON
L7M 3Z6
Tel: 905-331-7922
E-mail: kventer1@cogeco.ca

Ontario Breastfeeding Committee Membership Form

Ontario Breastfeeding Committee

Vision: Breastfeeding is the norm for infant feeding in Ontario

Goal: To facilitate the implementation of "Baby-Friendly™ Initiative" (BFI) in Ontario by:

- Developing partnerships and collaborative strategies with health care organizations, health care providers, consumers, and multisectorial organizations with an interest in breastfeeding
- Advocating for breastfeeding in Ontario
- Act as a resource centre for BFI in Ontario
- Delineating breastfeeding educational needs and encouraging breastfeeding research
- Provide expert advice and recommendations for policy and guideline development and implementation

Membership: Multidisciplinary health care providers, multisectorial organizations and consumers from across Ontario who have an interest in breastfeeding.

Annual Membership Fee due June 2005: Amount: \$10.

Name:

Affiliation:

Address:

Postal Code:

Tel:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E-mail:

Please indicate the following:

I am interested in the work of the following sub-committee:

Membership fee enclosed

Signed:

Date:

Return to: OBC, 2915 Headon Forest Drive, Suite #8, Burlington, ON L7M 3Z6