

**Breastfeeding: difficulties encountered by women and nurses' aid and strategies in the face of encouragement***Lactancia materna: dificultades encontradas por mujeres y enfermeros auxiliares y estrategias frente al estímulo**Aleitamento materno: dificuldades encontradas pelas mulheres e os auxílios e estratégias do enfermeiro diante ao incentivo***Rayssa Santos de Abreu<sup>1</sup>**

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Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.**How to cite this article:**

Abreu RS, Silva ACR, Silva WGR, Silva MLL, Freitas JG, Ramos MM, Melo JS, Caldas MBM, Vargas LR, Machado PRF. Breastfeeding: difficulties encountered by women and nurses' aid and strategies in the face of encouragement. *Glob Acad Nurs.* 2022;3(Sup.1):e243.  
<https://dx.doi.org/10.5935/2675-5602.20200243>

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Guimarães da FonsecaExecutive Editor: Kátia dos Santos  
Armada de Oliveira**Submission:** 03-15-2022**Approval:** 04-10-2022**Abstract**

The aim was to identify and describe the aids and strategies used by nurses in the first steps of breastfeeding. This is an integrative review carried out in October 2021 in the Virtual Health Library, in the LILACS and BDNF databases. The descriptors Breastfeeding, Infant Health and Nursing associated with the Boolean operator "AND" were used. Eight articles were analyzed. Two categories emerged: Strategies used by nurses to promote breastfeeding in the context of primary care and aids and strategies in breastfeeding in a hospital environment. In primary care, the main results found were the importance of health education and the best opportunity to ask questions, create a bond, bringing greater offer to breastfeeding. While in the hospital environment, the main results were to strengthen the importance of breastfeeding and guide the mother about the correct latch and the difficulties that can be encountered during the puerperium. Such important strategies used by nurses to encourage breastfeeding were evidenced: support for women from the beginning of pregnancy to the postpartum period, encouragement of prenatal consultations, family guidance, creation of bonds, breast milking and actions of Health education.

**Descriptors:** Breast Feeding; Infant Health; Nursing; Women's Health; Infant.**Resumen**

El objetivo fue identificar y describir las ayudas y estrategias utilizadas por los enfermeros en los primeros pasos de la lactancia materna. Se trata de una revisión integradora realizada en octubre de 2021 en la Biblioteca Virtual en Salud, en las bases de datos LILACS y BDNF. Se utilizaron los descriptores Lactancia Materna, Salud Infantil y Enfermería asociados al operador booleano "Y". Se analizaron ocho artículos. Emergieron dos categorías: Estrategias utilizadas por los enfermeros para promover la lactancia materna en el contexto de la atención primaria y ayudas y estrategias en la lactancia materna en un ambiente hospitalario. En la atención primaria, los principales resultados encontrados fueron la importancia de la educación en salud y la mejor oportunidad para hacer preguntas, crear un vínculo, trayendo una mayor oferta para la lactancia materna. Mientras que en el ambiente hospitalario, los principales resultados fueron fortalecer la importancia de la lactancia materna y orientar a la madre sobre el agarre correcto y las dificultades que se pueden encontrar durante el puerperio. Se evidenciaron estrategias tan importantes utilizadas por los enfermeros para incentivar la lactancia materna: apoyo a la mujer desde el inicio del embarazo hasta el puerperio, incentivo a las consultas prenatales, orientación familiar, creación de vínculos, lactancia materna y acciones de educación en Salud.

**Descriptores:** Lactancia Materna; Salud del Lactante; Enfermería; Salud de la Mujer; Lactante.**Resumo**

Objetivou-se identificar e descrever os auxílios e estratégias utilizadas pelo enfermeiro nos primeiros passos do aleitamento materno. Trata-se de Revisão integrativa realizada no mês de outubro de 2021 na Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde, nas bases de dados LILACS e BDNF. Utilizou-se os descritores Aleitamento materno, Saúde do lactente e Enfermagem associados ao operador booleano "AND". Foram analisados 8 artigos. Levantaram-se, duas categorias: Estratégias utilizadas pelo enfermeiro na promoção do aleitamento materno no âmbito da atenção primária e os auxílios e estratégias no aleitamento materno em âmbito hospitalar. Na atenção primária, os principais resultados encontrados foram a importância da educação em saúde e a melhor oportunidade de tirar dúvidas, criação de vínculo, trazendo maior oferta ao aleitamento materno. Enquanto em âmbito hospitalar, os principais resultados foram fortalecer a importância do aleitamento materno e orientar a mãe sobre a pega correta e nas dificuldades que podem ser encontradas durante o puerpério. Evidenciou-se tais estratégias importantes utilizadas pelos enfermeiros para o incentivo ao aleitamento materno: apoio para mulher desde o início da gestação até o pós-parto, incentivo as consultas de pré-natal, orientação familiar, criação de vínculos, ordenha mamária e ações de educação em saúde.

**Descriptores:** Aleitamento Materno; Saúde do Lactente; Enfermagem; Saúde da Mulher; Lactente.

## Introduction

Breastfeeding (BF) is a fundamental practice for the development of babies. According to the Ministry of Health (MH), breast milk (BM) is the main food for children, being offered exclusively during the first 6 months of life and together with other foods until 2 years of age, since this contains all the protein sources needed for this age group. The benefits of breast milk for the infant are: preventing infant mortality, diabetes, respiratory infections, reducing the risk of allergies, among others<sup>1</sup>.

During this period of breastfeeding, puerperal women encounter some obstacles that can make them feel unable to take advantage of this moment and understand the importance of the act. Among these difficulties, we can mention pathophysiological issues such as engorgement, mastitis, blockage of lactiferous ducts and infection that, consequently, can lead to the withdrawal of breast milk to the child and the advance of the use of industrialized products<sup>2</sup>.

Faced with these difficulties, some mothers give up the exclusive offer of breast milk during the first 6 months and begin to introduce industrialized milk, water and other foods for the baby, which do not offer nutritional and

immunological benefits. This early introduction of food also happens because women need to return to their work routine, so they stay away from home for a long time, sometimes without the support of the family and are afraid of the child not feeling satisfied<sup>3</sup>.

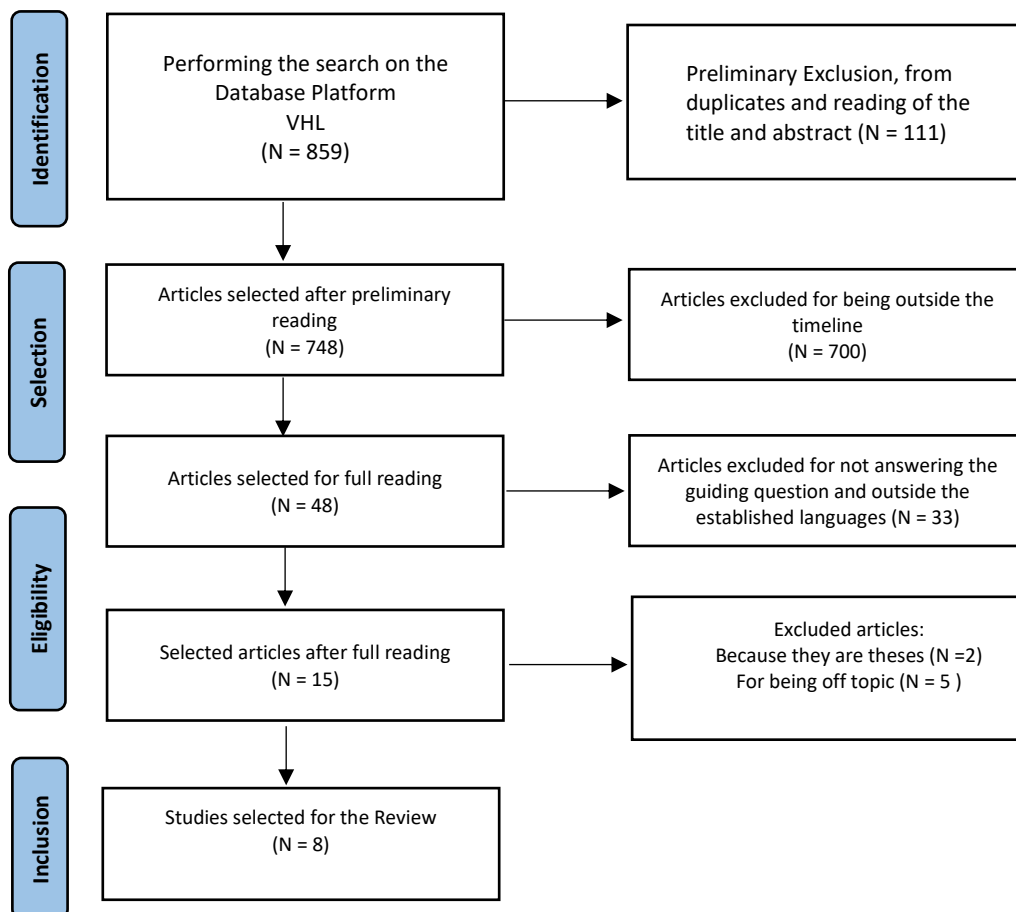
Some newborns (NB) are unable to suck at the breast for a period, at this time breast milking, which is the emptying of the breasts with the use of suction pumps or manually, is a necessary method to ensure that the infant is fed with the LM. This milking must be carried out several times a day to maintain LM production.

Knowing the importance of promoting breastfeeding and the role of nursing in this field, this study aims to answer the guiding question: What are the aids and strategies used by nurses in the first steps of breastfeeding.

## Methodology

The work is characterized by the study of integrative review, which consists of gathering and synthesizing research results on a delimited theme or question, in a systematic and orderly manner, obtaining a deep understanding of a given phenomenon based on previous studies<sup>4</sup>.

Figure 1. Flowchart of selected articles. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil, 2021



The integrative review is built through different stages. These steps are identification of the theme; literature search; categorization of studies; evaluation of studies included in the integrative review; interpretation of results

and presentation of the review. The first stage of the research consists of the elaboration of the following guiding question: "What are the aids and strategies provided by nurses in promoting breastfeeding?"<sup>4</sup>.

For the literature search, the Virtual Health Library Database Platform (VHL) was used, using the descriptors found in the Health Sciences Descriptors (DeCS): Breastfeeding, Infant Health and Nursing, associated with the Boolean operator “AND”, resulting in a total of 855 articles.

In the next step, in addition to the descriptors presented, inclusion and exclusion criteria were listed. For inclusion criteria: Texts published in the last 5 years (2016-2021); free in the databases; in Portuguese, English or Spanish and full text. In addition, for filtering and better selection of articles for the present study, the following exclusion criteria were adopted duplicate articles and whose title, abstract and full reading did not suit the proposed theme.

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After using the descriptors in the VHL, 859 cataloged articles were obtained. Then, using the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 33 were excluded because of the language outside the criteria, 700 were excluded for time exceeding 5 years, 111 were excluded after reading the abstract and title, 5 were outside the topic and 2 were excluded because it was a thesis. , resulting in a total of 8 eligible articles.

In order to demonstrate these more organized values, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Flowchart was performed. Being demonstrated in Figure 1.

**Results**

After carrying out a survey of the data obtained from the 8 articles for the bibliographic review, in order to facilitate the understanding and visualization of the data obtained, a table was organized that contains: Title of the article, authors, year and summary of results (Chart 1).

**Chart 1.** Summary of selected results. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil, 2021

| Title  | Authors   | Year | Summary of results   |
|--|---|------|--|
| Estratégias e ações do enfermeiro no incentivo ao aleitamento materno: revisão integrativa                             | Marina Delli Zotti Souza Viana; Daiany Saldanha da Silveira Donaduzzi; Andrieli Berger da Rosa; Fernanda Almeida Fettermann.  | 2021 | The research results show that nurses were successful in promoting breastfeeding using strategies such as promoting autonomy, strengthening the bond between professional-pregnant women through communication, group of pregnant women to clarify doubts and encourage family support.  |
| Práticas de enfermeiros e a influência sociocultural na adesão ao aleitamento materno                                  | Giovana Callegaro Higashi; Sibeli Seefeld dos Santos; Rosielle Souza da Silva; Leonardo Bigolin Jantsch; Rafael Marcelo Soder; Luiz Anildo Anacleto da Silva.                 | 2021 | The importance of health education in the construction of professional-pregnant and professional-family bonds, the offer of a group of pregnant women, was demonstrated. The incentives made during prenatal care, in the third trimester and in the puerperium showed greater adherence to breastfeeding.   |
| Promoção do aleitamento materno no contexto da estratégia de saúde da família  | Felipe dos Santos Costa, Jorge Luiz Lima da Silva, Emanoele Amaral Machado, Lunna Machado Soares, Cristian Antônio Brezolin, João Victor Lima Silva.                          | 2021 | The permanent training of health teams proved to be essential for the promotion of breastfeeding, bringing support to mothers. Reception, building bonds along with educational actions to promote health for comprehensive care were also mentioned.  |
| Effect of a breastfeeding educational intervention: a randomized controlled trial                                      | Erdnaxela Fernandes do Carmo Souza; Alfredo Almeida Pina-Oliveira; Antonieta Keiko Kakuda Shimo.  | 2020 | It was identified that an educational intervention of verbal and visual orientation of the BF using the KEAM (Educational Breastfeeding Kit) brought favorable influences in the promotion of breastfeeding in health institutions.  |
| Representações do cuidado de Enfermagem às mães para a manutenção da lactação na Unidade de Terapia Intensiva Neonatal | Daiani Oliveira Cherubim; Andressa Peripolli Rodrigues; Cristiane Cardoso de Paula; Stela Maris de Mello Padoin; Tatiane Correa Trojahn; Flavia Pinhão Nunes de Souza Rechia. | 2018 | It was noticed that nursing professionals find it difficult to provide guidance in the NICU because the physical space and the routine of the unit's professionals make it difficult to carry out these actions. Therefore, professionals understand the importance of bonding during breastfeeding, but they do not have the time to support these mothers. |
| Facilidades e dificuldades encontradas pelas púérperas para amamentar  | Priscila Daniele Gonçalves Urbanetto; Giovana Calcagno Gomes; Aline Rodrigues Costa; Camila Magroski Goulart Nobre; Daiani Modernel Xavier; Bianca Contreira de Jung.         | 2018 | The results show that mothers find it easy to breastfeed the NB because they understand the importance of the source of protection that the LM offers for their baby. Among the difficulties cited, pain, nipple fissure and breast engorgement are among the main causes.   |
| Aleitamento materno em lactentes com fissura labiopalatina   | Armando dos Santos Trettene, Thaís de Oliveira Maximiano, Carolina Cantatore Beraldo, Juliana Silvério Campanati Mendonça, Aline Godoi Luiz, Beatriz Costa.                   | 2018 | The most frequent reason, pointed out by mothers, for non-adherence to BF was related to ineffective sucking, it was also pointed out that choking and nasal reflux of food.   |



|  |  |      |  |
|--|--|------|--|
| Protection and support breastfeeding: a contribution of bank of human milk | Maria Bertilla Lutterbach Riker Branco, Valdecyr Herdy Alves, Diego Pereira Rodrigues, Rosangela de Mattos Pereira de Souza, Fernanda de Oliveira Lopes, Tuány Figueiredo Marinho. | 2016 | HMB professionals are responsible for informing mothers about the importance of BF protection. In addition to reinforcing the abusive consumption of products that are substitutes for LM. |
|--|--|------|--|

The selected articles demonstrated effective strategies for the promotion of breastfeeding, such as reception, bonding, pregnant women's group to ask questions. Thus, the main strategies used by nurses found in the publications were grouped and classified into categories, in order to organize and systematize the information in each article.

National studies cover 100% of the theoretical framework, the state of Rio Grande do Sul predominated with 4 articles (50%), followed by Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, both with 2 articles (25%), totaling 50%. As for the annual period category, the years that registered more publications on the subject studied were 2018 with 3 articles (37.5%) and 2021 with 3 articles (37.5%) totaling 75% of the study. It is noteworthy that the year 2016 recorded 2 articles (12.5%) and 2020 with 2 articles (12.5%), totaling 25% of the study.

In this study, there is a scarcity of articles that point out nurses' strategies in the hospital environment, highlighting the predominance of studies that address nurses' strategies in the context of primary care. In addition, the precariousness of studies on a global scale is highlighted, since all articles were nationally.

**Discussion**

After carrying out a critical analysis of the studies, they were classified and arranged into two main categories, which are the strategies used by nurses to promote breastfeeding in the context of primary care and strategies used by nurses to promote breastfeeding in the hospital environment.

**Strategies used by nurses to promote breastfeeding in the context of primary care**

Primary Health Care (PHC) is the first level of health care and is characterized by a set of health actions with the objective of developing comprehensive care that positively impacts the health situation of communities. In addition, nurses in this environment have the opportunity to clarify doubts and provide guidance on the importance of breastfeeding. In this perspective, the publications of this integrative review demonstrated strategies for the promotion of breastfeeding in primary care<sup>2</sup>.

According to studies, the main strategies carried out by nurses in promoting breastfeeding in primary care were related to welcoming, bonding, health education, encouraging family support, counseling, promoting autonomy and interdisciplinary articulation. Faced with this, care from prenatal to postpartum with these mothers promoted an increase in the offer of BF, bringing a better quality of life for mother and baby<sup>2,5-7</sup>.

Health education can be done through nursing, prenatal and postpartum consultations, bringing prevention measures and guidance on breastfeeding. This strategy may be associated with the use of videos, educational leaflets, during the home visit, the creation of a group of pregnant women and video conferences. In this way, it was evidenced that actions such as creating an environment to solve doubts, demystify cultural knowledge that generate fear and anxiety, as well as difficulties that may appear during the breastfeeding process<sup>2,5,7</sup>.

In addition to the measures mentioned above, an Educational Kit on Breastfeeding (EAM Kit), which contains 15 items with a didactic doll, didactic breast, illustrative cards, among others, was used for guidance and promotion of BF, obtaining positive results in which it minimized the difficulties and maintained a higher percentage of exclusive breastfeeding compared to women who received only routine guidance from the team<sup>7</sup>.

Another important strategy is the promotion of family support and encouragement of the mother-baby bond. Not all breastfeeding is accompanied, easy and painless. From this, family support is essential to encourage breastfeeding, which can help to reduce anxieties and help the woman's persistence with breastfeeding, in which she will have a safe and peaceful environment. The nurse can also help the mother-baby bond by explaining the importance of breastfeeding both for baby nutrition and for the bonds between them, amplifying the meaning of breastfeeding<sup>3,8</sup>.

Accordingly, from the link mentioned above, multidisciplinary training with different professionals is necessary to cover the assistance as a whole. From the doctor, nurse and train community health agents, nursing technicians, from the proximity with the pediatrician providing practical knowledge. This will promote greater security for multiple professionals and guarantee quality care for women in their gestational and puerperal period, strengthening the care network<sup>2</sup>.

**Aids and strategies in breastfeeding in a hospital setting**

Nurses' aids and strategies for breastfeeding in a hospital environment begin from the moment they enter the delivery room until hospital discharge. The moment of breastfeeding allows the exchange between mother and baby. However, guidance on the benefits and correct way of breastfeeding is necessary. In the hospital environment, this BF process needs to be properly monitored by the nursing professional. It is essential that the professional is highly prepared to provide the correct assistance to this puerperal woman, as BF is not an easy practice<sup>2</sup>.

From the study analysis, it was observed that after hospital discharge, postpartum women receive a medical



prescription for formulas. This early act influences mothers on the supply of industrialized milk to the NB in case of difficulties. Still in the same study, it is observed that the suggestion of offering other derivatives, other than the breastfeeding process, influences the abandonment of the practice.

Due, among other factors of breastfeeding difficulties, the nursing professional who works with this puerperal woman must strengthen the importance of BF, in addition to informing them about all the nutrients that the LM has, thus not needing other types of food<sup>2</sup>.

In another study, it is explained that BF in the hospital environment can become difficult, because with the interventionist routine, the displacement of both becomes tiring and concerns hinder the success of breastfeeding. With this, nursing should encourage the puerperal woman about the benefits for her and her baby, showing that milk, in addition to feeding the NB with all the necessary nutrients, will create a bond between the two<sup>9</sup>.

One of the difficulties presented by postpartum women is breast engorgement or inverted nipples. It is the responsibility of the professional nurse to guide her on the correct position of the NB in the act of breastfeeding, thus favoring the best grip in the act of suction and thus abandoning the old practice of physical preparation of the breast, which has no proven benefits. According to the study, another practice that should be guided is breast milking with the aid of a suction pump, in the hospital

environment, and later this woman should be guided on how to perform this practice manually<sup>9,10</sup>.

## Conclusion

It is noteworthy that the strategies mentioned presented benefits for the mother and baby, bringing autonomy and empowerment to women, with important guidelines for reducing insecurity, which can make breastfeeding last longer. However, it is important to respect the mother's desire not to want to breastfeed, question her about her desire to perform BF, informing about all the benefits already described, in addition to always remembering that she has full support from the nursing team in the face of any difficulty<sup>11</sup>.

Despite the importance of the theme in Brazil and in the world, there is a lack of studies addressing the actions of nurses in the hospital environment. However, more studies are needed covering the interventions, strategies and methodologies that professionals should use to help postpartum women and babies who need to stay longer in hospital. The lack of international studies on the chosen theme was also observed.

Therefore, it becomes clear that the importance of nursing to encourage BF, bringing security to these mothers and family members. Caring for others goes beyond technological interventions. Feelings are associated with verbal and non-verbal actions, such as listening and touching, showing empathy with the other.

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