



Golden August: Breastfeeding, a golden act in primary care

Agosto dourado: Amamentar, um ato que vale ouro na atenção primária

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Sarah Costa Olini¹, Ystefânia Rodrigues Lima da Silva², Ana Paula Bandeira Matos de Serpa Andrade³, Sara Janai Corado Lopes⁴.

ABSTRACT

The essential attributes of Primary Health Care are attention in the first contact, longitudinality, comprehensiveness and coordination, and the derived attributes are: orientation of families, community and cultural competence. In addition to all the attributes that primary health care has, one of its roles is to encourage the practice of breastfeeding. The objective of this study is to describe the importance of educational actions on breastfeeding in primary health care units. The methodological approach adopted was a descriptive study, which resulted from a report of the experience of nursing students during the practice of Primary Health Care II, a process of experiences and critical reflections on the golden August and on breastfeeding, experienced in the 10th period of the Nursing course, in August 2023. It was observed that the activities were carried out in the collective activities room of the UBS, where six pregnant women were present. Some in their first pregnancy, and others with experience of a second pregnancy, which contributed to the construction of a dialogue and the teaching-learning process. It was noticeable that there was a construction throughout the action, with interactions between them and the students in the conversation circle, thus solving doubts and sharing knowledge. It was presented through the synthetic breast, the anatomical and physiological region, exposing the correct region in which the baby should suck, being the areolar region and not the nipple. The signs of correct latching were also presented and demonstrated, such as: the positioning of the baby chin when touching the mother, causing the lips to be directed outwards like a fish's mouth and the flow occurs gradually and painlessly. It has been verified that the team's interaction with these women contributes to improving the practice of breastfeeding and facilitating its acceptance and continuity. Based on the above, the implementation of health education actions aimed at breastfeeding is essential within PHC. It can be seen that exclusive breastfeeding until six months is of paramount importance for both the baby and the mother. In addition to reducing

¹ Lattes: 0505134213466695

Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos-ITPAC)

E-mail: saraholinienf@gmail.com

² Lattes: 1425981300868236

ORCID: 0009-0007-2515-6510

Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos-ITPAC)

E-mail: ystefaniasoul@gmail.com

³ Lattes: 7707917866277192

ORCID: 0009-0005-1405-3538

Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos-ITPAC

E-mail: anapaula.matos@itpacporto.edu.br

⁴ Lattes: 3199193467116521

ORCID: 0000-0001-5814-6158

Instituto Tocantinense Presidente Antônio Carlos-ITPAC

E-mail: janaisinha@hotmail.com



mortality, it decreases the incidence and severity of some comorbidities. In this way, the experiences made it possible to enrich the knowledge in the professional training of the students, enabling the visualization of new ways of approaching pregnant women, offering comprehensive care, and demonstrating the potential of the performance of Primary Care in the territory, in the families and in the collectivity.

Keywords: Breastfeeding, Breastfeeding, Primary care, Golden August.

INTRODUCTION

Primary Care (PC) is characterized by varied sets of actions, which are evidenced to an individual or to a collective, which include: health promotion, disease prevention, diagnosis, health maintenance and treatment. (Brazil, 2017). Among the promotion and prevention actions aimed at individuals and families are health education being used as a light technology within Primary Health Care.

The essential attributes of Primary Health Care are attention in the first contact, longitudinality, comprehensiveness and coordination, with the derived attributes being the orientation of families and the community and cultural competence. (Brazil, 2018)

In addition to all the attributes that primary health care has, one of its roles is to encourage the practice of breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is the process of feeding babies with the milk produced by the mother (breast milk). It is an act that makes a great difference in the child's life, at the same time as breastfeeding, it increases the relationship between mother and child, contributing to the child's cognitive, nutritional, and emotional development (Sanar, 2020).

Breastfeeding is directly linked to the health of the child and the health of the mother, both of which are of great importance in her health. According to the WHO, breastfeeding should be required to feed the newborn/infant and should be exclusive from the first day to the first 6 months of life, after which the act of breastfeeding becomes the main food for a food supplement until the first 2 years of life, where the mother should slowly administer more liquid foods to have a more tolerable adaptation for the child (Brazil, 2022).

The importance of breastfeeding is significant, it is estimated that worldwide, the expansion of breastfeeding is capable of preventing around 20 thousand deaths of women victims of breast cancer per year, in addition to avoiding 823 thousand deaths of children under five years of age (Moraes et al., 2016).

In relation to breastfeeding, a lot of information should be considered, such as: the child's attachment to the mother's breast, the time it will be fed, the composition that the milk should have, the care that the mother should have with the breast if it is hurt, the benefits that both



mother and child will have during breastfeeding and some information about health that may or may not directly influence breastfeeding (Brazil, 2015).

Due to the importance of breastfeeding, Law No. 13,435/2017 was enacted, which determines the so-called Golden August, aimed at intensifying intersectoral actions to raise awareness and clarify the importance of breastfeeding. Thus, primary care units carry out promotion and prevention actions focused on the importance of breastfeeding through conversation circles/lectures in order to inform individuals and families (Brasil, 2017).

Studies show the importance and benefits of breastfeeding over other ways of feeding the child during its first two years of life, proving that breastfeeding is essential to reduce infant mortality. Based on this, the objective of this study is to describe the importance of educational actions aimed at breastfeeding in Primary Care.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical support for the foundation of this article is based on the principle that the Breastfeeding Month in Brazil was instituted by Law No. 13,435/2,017, which brings the intensification of actions to raise awareness and clarify the importance of breastfeeding throughout the national territory.

The advances in the practice of breastfeeding can be attributed to the promotion actions initiated in Brazil in the 1990s through strategies to promote breastfeeding in health services that were implemented and launched, such as the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative by the WHO and UNICEF. This initiative advocates steps for successful breastfeeding, created based on actions already developed in primary care, with effectiveness in extending the duration of exclusive breastfeeding, such as guidance provided to pregnant women in the prenatal period and to mothers in the postpartum period. (Alves; Olive tree; Rite, 2018)

The practice of breastfeeding, especially the actions that guide this act, is of fundamental importance for the mother, the child and society, and should always be encouraged and empowered. It is a natural strategy of bonding, affection, protection, and nutrition for the child, bringing results and impact in promoting the integral health of the mother/baby binomial and, consequently, in reducing infant and maternal morbidity and mortality (Lima et al., 2019).

It is of fundamental importance within PHC that all professionals involved have knowledge about breastfeeding and the importance of monitoring the puerperal woman during pregnancy and in the postpartum period to provide guidance and clarification, as well as to



provide early identification of any difficulty or problem so that breastfeeding is not suspended, thus ensuring the success of this act (Nogueira et al, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach adopted was a descriptive study based on an experience report. Thus, we seek to address the experience of a group of students of the tenth period of the Nursing course, discipline Supervised Curricular Internship in Nursing Care to Primary Health Care II (PHC – II), in a Basic Health Unit in the city of Porto Nacional-Tocantins. This study was conducted in August 2023.

The students of the discipline were instructed that they would get to know some Basic Health Units to better understand the functioning of the Golden August, bringing allusion to breastfeeding and its importance in the life of the newborn and the mother. All students actively participated in activities related to the theme, followed by a division and draw to define the place and theme the group would be responsible for carrying out the health education action for pregnant women in the unit.

In the meeting of the students for praxis, they were inserted in the service provided by the health professionals, as well as a presentation of the target audience. The nurse in charge of the UBS of the place made a brief approach about the functioning, actions performed, the team that constitutes the service, as well as the functioning of the application of strategies to achieve the indicators.

Before the execution, the students were instructed by the preceptor to read the PNAB Governing Ordinance on Breastfeeding and to develop an instrument with points that they considered important for the good performance of the service.

After the students approached the theme, they also carried out a practical sampling of how the baby should be positioned with the synthetic parts of the breasts and newborn requested in the laboratory of the IES – ITPAC/FAPAC Porto Nacional. This practice was essential to consolidate the knowledge of the students and to identify the relevance of joint work for the development of health actions, as well as to solve the doubts of pregnant women.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The action began with a brief introduction, informing about the golden month of August, the reason for this name, as well as the aspects related to breastfeeding.

The activities were carried out in the collective activities room of the UBS, where six pregnant women were present. Some in their first pregnancy, and others with experience of a second pregnancy, which contributed to the construction of a dialogue and the teaching-learning process. It was noticeable that there was a construction throughout the action, with interactions between them and the students in the conversation circle, thus solving doubts and sharing knowledge.

Health education actions should start from the first prenatal visit and continue during subsequent visits, including postpartum and postpartum care. (BRAZIL, 2017)

After the introductory moment, in a playful way and to facilitate the teaching-learning process, a synthetic breast was used, as shown in Figure 1, to present the appropriate form of breastfeeding, the correct latch, the physiology of the breast and the entire breastfeeding process.

Figure 1 - Breast used for explanations and demonstrations.



Source: The authors (2023).

Thus, the anatomical and physiological region was presented through the synthetic breast, exposing the correct region in which the baby should suck, being the areolar region and not the nipple. The signs of correct latching were also presented and demonstrated, such as: the positioning of the baby chin when touching the mother, causing the lips to be directed outwards like a fish's mouth and the flow occurs gradually and painlessly.

According to the Brazilian Company of Hospital Services – EBSEH (2019), in breastfeeding there are many positions for the mother and the baby during breastfeeding, where the mother must be relaxed and comfortable according to the position she chooses, and can be

lying down, sitting or standing, as long as she and the baby feel comfortable, and in all of them the baby's body must be close and entirely facing the mother, It should be aligned, the baby's nose should point towards the nipple and the baby's mouth should be brought closer so that he can put most of the areola inside his mouth.

In addition to the synthetic breast, a doll was also used to represent the baby, as shown in Figure 2, facilitating the demonstration of how to hold, position the child, and position the chin.

Figure 2 - Presentation of the Golden August by the academics.



Source: The authors (2023).

The Ministry of Health argues that for good breastfeeding, latching on is also essential, and should occur through a wide opening of the baby's mouth, grabbing part of the areola, so that, in this way, a seal is formed between the mouth and the breast, forming a vacuum that keeps the nipple and areola inside the baby's mouth. (Brazil, 2015).

The way the mother and the baby position themselves for breastfeeding, or the breastfeeding technique, as well as the baby's latching/sucking are fundamental for the baby to be able to suck milk efficiently and not to hurt the mother's nipples (Brasil, 2015).

This presentation with the synthetic breast opened space for a very interesting dialogue with pregnant women, especially to answer questions about breastfeeding. Many pregnant women asked about nipple darkening, about what to do when there are fissures in the breast to the detriment of breastfeeding. This allowed us to place even more emphasis on proper latching in order to reduce the wounds caused by breastfeeding.



It has been verified that the team's interaction with these women contributes to improving the practice of breastfeeding and facilitating its acceptance and continuity. One of the main aspects that deserved the team's attention and a different look is the interruption of exclusive breastfeeding. Thus, it is important that health professionals are able to advise and monitor the breastfeeding process in a comprehensive way.

Primary Care enables interaction with the community, seeking to build, in a participatory and co-responsible way, more effective practices and strategies to cope with health needs and problems. One of the priority problems within primary care is to intervene in the early interruption of exclusive breastfeeding (EBF). From this perspective, communication is indispensable to ensure EBF, as it is the main means of conveying the educational process. (Brazil, 2017).

Therefore, health professionals, especially nurses, should be able to talk, advise, guide and support mothers about breastfeeding and check how they feel, expanding knowledge and understanding of the breastfeeding process.

In order to consolidate the actions of promotion and exchange of knowledge, the professionals, especially the nurse, have to show themselves as a person who is there to help and not judge. This is the basis of a bond of trust between the two, which is necessary for the proposed objectives to be achieved.

According to the Brazilian Company of Hospital Services – EBSEH (2019), in breastfeeding there are many positions for the mother and the baby during breastfeeding, where the mother must be relaxed and comfortable according to the position she chooses, and can be lying down, sitting or standing, as long as she and the baby feel comfortable, and in all of them the baby's body must be close and entirely facing the mother, It should be aligned, the baby's nose should point towards the nipple and the baby's mouth should be brought closer so that he can put most of the areola inside his mouth.

At the end of the action, an educational folder was delivered to the pregnant women (Figure 3), containing information on the theme of golden August, with tips and step-by-step instructions on the correct way to breastfeed, also containing pertinent information on breastfeeding.

Figure 3 - Educational brochure about the Golden August.



Source: The authors (2023).

The article "Health Education" discusses the role of the Nurse in Breastfeeding being crucial in the promotion of breastfeeding. The study concludes that although most mothers have a good level of knowledge about the benefits of breastfeeding, this knowledge alone is not enough to ensure the success of exclusive breastfeeding. This highlights the need for continuous and effective health education actions (Silva and Santos, 2020).

Finally, the article "Health Education as a Tool for Breastfeeding Promotion" highlights that educational interventions can help women better understand the context of breastfeeding and accept this practice (Pereira et al., 2021).

These studies clearly show that health education actions are essential to promote breastfeeding and provide mothers with the necessary information and support. Therefore, we conclude the importance of health education actions within PHC and reinforce that this is a powerful tool for promoting breastfeeding.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Based on the above, the implementation of health education actions aimed at breastfeeding is essential within PHC. It can be seen that exclusive breastfeeding until six months is of paramount importance for both the baby and the mother. In addition to reducing mortality, it decreases the incidence and severity of some comorbidities.



Therefore, there are numerous arguments in favor, however, we know that there are many difficulties that breastfeeding women face when exercising this act of love. Knowing how to identify the cause of these difficulties in PHC is of paramount importance for systematized follow-up.

It is important for health professionals to encourage, guide and support mothers regarding the benefits of breastfeeding, providing the necessary information to strengthen the practice of breastfeeding. This work not only contributes to academic training, but also reinforces and stimulates the production of new research that addresses the importance of breastfeeding so that it can contribute to a better quality of life for people in the future.

In this way, the experiences made it possible to enrich the knowledge in the professional training of the students, enabling the visualization of new ways of approaching pregnant women, offering comprehensive care, and demonstrating the potential of the performance of Primary Care in the territory, in the families and in the collectivity.



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