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Free access link:

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/bmjopen/10/9/e036757.full.pdf>

Article Overview:

This review assesses the evidence on infant and young child feeding practices (IYCF) in conflict settings.

This review included 56 studies conducted in settings inflicted with armed conflict (settings undergoing conflict and those within 5 years of its cessation).

Key take home messages:

1. The coverage of infant and young child feeding practices (IYCF) are low in conflict settings, with only half of the children receiving early initiation of breast feeding and only a quarter being exclusively breast fed.
2. Displacement, stress, maternal malnourishment, lack of awareness and unavailability of trained healthcare professionals, are all reasons contributing to poor IYCF. The death of the male members within the family also poses an additional barrier.
3. Barriers: lack of awareness and knowledge of health workers and misconceptions in the community.
4. To improve IYCF, several interventions should be implemented, including
 - Training of health workers
 - Educating mothers
 - Community networking and mobilisation
 - Lactation-support service
 - Baby friendly hospital initiatives
 - Mother–baby friendly spaces and support groups
5. Recommendations: IYCF should be underscored and it should be a top priority for improving the health of children in conflict settings. It is important to provide clean hygienic utensils and safe drinking water and the support of 'wet nurse' and 'milk banks' for mothers unable to breast feed.