

### f. Counselling tips

- You are there to help the mother, not to take over.
- Use verbal and non-verbal skills to make her feel at ease.
- Encourage and praise her; every mother has the ability to breastfeed. Often mothers are worried that they are inexperienced and lack the confidence. Many women do not breastfeed successfully because they do not get good advice, support and encouragement.



- If she says something that you do not agree with, do not say 'that is wrong'. Do not make her feel bad or stupid. You can repeat what she says (For example, 'I hear you saying that you think you don't have enough milk....' Ask her why she thinks so. Listen to what she is saying and why).
- After you assess the breastfeeding, you should check the baby's weight gain.
- Give advice in simple and clear language.
- Make sure the mother understands what you are saying.
- Have her repeat what she will try to do.

### g. Why only breastfeeding?

Giving other food or fluid may harm the baby in following ways

- It reduces the amount of breast milk taken by the baby.
- It may contain germs from water or on feeding bottles or utensils. These germs can cause diarrhoea.
- It may be too dilute, so the baby becomes malnourished.
- Baby does not get enough iron from cow's and goat's milk and may thus develop anaemia.
- Baby may develop allergies.
- Baby may have difficulty digesting animal milk; the milk can cause diarrhoea, rashes or other symptoms. Diarrhoea may become persistent.
- Breast milk provides all the water a baby needs. Babies do not need extra water even during the summer months.

