Zusammenfassung der Master-Thesis von

Julia Dratva

The Timing of Complementary Feeding of Infants in Switzerland Compliance with the Swiss and the WHO guidelines

Abstract:

Aim:

The importance of adequate complementary feeding of infants is increasingly acknowledged. Little is known on the actual complementary feeding practices and the compliance to infant feeding guidelines in Switzerland. This article reports the prevalence of adequate timing of the introduction of solids and semi-solids to infants in Switzerland, comparing the compliance to Swiss and WHO guidelines, and investigates factors influencing infant complementary feeding.

Methods:

In 2003 a cross-sectional study was conducted of mothers in Switzerland who had given birth in the preceding nine months. The mothers, randomly chosen by local community mother and child health services, completed a 24 hours dietary recall questionnaire and reported the child's age at the first introduction of various foods. Descriptive analysis, group testing and regression analysis of data collected were conducted.

Results:

Introduction of solids mainly occurred between the 5 – 6 months. 5% of the mothers introduced complementary food before the age of 4 months. Fruit and Vegetables were the first solids to be fed, followed by cereals, bread and meat. Main influencing factors for infant feeding were maternal age, language regions, the mother's BMI and smoking status.

Conclusion:

In Switzerland the timing of the introduction of complementary foods, in general as well as for specific foods, is in accordance to Swiss guidelines. WHO recommendations, however, are not met. This is possibly due to misunderstanding of

the Swiss Pediatric Association's age range recommendations or insufficient promotion of the WHO recommendations.

Julia Dratva, Dr. med., Institute of Soc. and Prev. Medicine Basel Steinengraben 49 4051 Basel, CH. (Tel: +41 61 2676517 julia.dratva@unibas.ch