



## The benefits of breastfeeding in the first hour of life

*Los beneficios de la lactancia materna en la primera hora de vida*

*Os benefícios do aleitamento materno na primeira hora de vida*

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### Abstract

The aim was to identify in the scientific literature the importance of breastfeeding in the newborn's first hour of life. This is an integrative literature review, based on the guiding question "What is the importance of breastfeeding in the first hour of life?". Searches were carried out in LILACS, SciELO, Medline and BDNF databases, using the descriptors "Breastfeeding", "Postpartum period", "Maternity Hospitals", "Maternal and Child Health Services" and "Newborn". Using the inclusion criteria: articles in Portuguese, published at interval of the last five years, fully available through electronic access. And the exclusion criteria: dissertations, duplications, which did not answer the guiding question and review articles. Breastfeeding in the first hour of life reduces the neonatal mortality rate, immunological protection and promotes conditions for the development of the newborn's body systems, in addition to producing oxytocin, reducing the risk of developing hemorrhage and other maternal complications. It is noted that breastfeeding in the first hour of the newborn's life offers numerous maternal benefits and especially for the newborn, promoting an improvement in the child's overall health.

**Descriptors:** Breastfeeding; Postpartum Period; Maternity Wards; Maternal and Child Health Services; Newborn.

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## Resumén

El objetivo fue identificar en la literatura científica la importancia de la lactancia materna en la primera hora de vida del recién nacido. Se trata de una revisión integradora de la literatura, basada en la pregunta orientadora "¿Cuál es la importancia de la lactancia materna en la primera hora de la vida?". Las búsquedas se realizaron en las bases de datos LILACS, SciELO, Medline y BDNF, utilizando los descriptores "Lactancia materna", "Posparto", "Hospitales de maternidad", "Servicios de salud materno-infantil" y "Recién nacido". Utilizando los criterios de inclusión: artículos en portugués, publicados a intervalo de los últimos cinco años, totalmente disponibles a través de acceso electrónico. Y los criterios de exclusión: disertaciones, duplicaciones, que no respondieron a la pregunta orientadora y artículos de revisión. La lactancia materna en la primera hora de vida reduce la tasa de mortalidad neonatal, la protección inmunológica y promueve las condiciones para el desarrollo de los sistemas corporales del recién nacido, además de producir oxitocina, reduciendo el riesgo de desarrollar hemorragias y otras complicaciones maternas. Se observa que la lactancia materna en la primera hora de vida del recién nacido ofrece numerosos beneficios para la madre y especialmente para el recién nacido, promoviendo una mejora en la salud general del niño.

**Descriptores:** Amamantamiento; Período Posparto; Hospitales de Maternidad; Servicios de Salud Materno-infantil; Recién Nacido.

## Resumo

Objetivou-se identificar na literatura científica a importância do aleitamento materno na primeira hora de vida do recém-nascido. Trata-se de uma pesquisa de revisão integrativa da literatura, elaborada a partir da questão norteadora "Qual a importância do aleitamento materno na primeira hora de vida?". Foram realizadas pesquisas nas bases de dados LILACS, SciELO, Medline e BDNF, utilizando os descritores "Aleitamento materno", "Período pós-parto", "Maternidades", "Serviços de saúde materno-infantil" e "Recém-nascido". Utilizando os critérios de inclusão: artigos no idioma português, publicados com intervalo dos últimos cinco anos, disponíveis totalmente na íntegra através do acesso eletrônico. E os critérios de exclusão: dissertações, duplicações, que não respondiam à questão norteadora e artigos de revisão. O aleitamento materno na primeira hora de vida gera a redução do índice de mortalidade neonatal, proteção imunológica e promove condições para o desenvolvimento de sistemas do corpo do recém-nascido, além de produzir a ocitocina, reduzindo o risco de se desenvolver hemorragia e outras complicações maternas. Nota-se que o aleitamento materno na primeira hora de vida do recém-nascido oferece inúmeros benefícios maternos e principalmente ao neonato, promovendo melhoria na saúde global da criança.

**Descritores:** Aleitamento Materno; Período Pós-Parto; Maternidades; Serviços de Saúde Materno-Infantil; Recém-Nascido.

## Introduction

Breastfeeding is considered an important child survival strategy by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), the World Health Organization (WHO) and child protection agencies. In the first hour postpartum, breastfeeding is the first dietary practice of human beings, being considered one of the factors that will ensure their health, adequate growth, and development, at all stages of the life cycle. In addition to conferring advantages for children, women, and society, it represents the most sensitive, economical and effective intervention for the promotion of maternal and child health<sup>1-3</sup>.

On the first day of life, breastfeeding reduces the chances of neonatal deaths by 16.0%. And, when started up to the first hour of life, the percentage of this reduction in mortality increases to 22.0%, and the longer the start of breastfeeding is delayed, the greater the chances of neonatal mortality caused by infections<sup>2</sup>.

Breast milk provides high quality nutrition, providing all the necessary nutrients for the child due to its nutritional properties. Contains in its composition: colostrum, proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, trace elements and immunological components that provide

a protective effect leading to an increase in the infant's immunity and benefits that will extend throughout life<sup>4</sup>.

The immediate benefits of exclusive breastfeeding right after childbirth are numerous. For the newborn, colostrum known as the "first vaccine" guarantees the capacity against infections, for example, for necrotizing enterocolitis, gastrointestinal and respiratory tract infections, allergies, septicemia, and meningitis, in addition to being always ready at the ideal temperature for the child. Breastfeeding after childbirth is also beneficial to the mother, as sucking stimulates the release of endogenous oxytocin, which induces uterine contraction, preventing puerperal hemorrhages, the main cause of maternal mortality in the world<sup>1</sup>.

Skin-to-skin contact, right after birth, favors the establishment of the mother-child bond, bringing physical and psychological benefits for both. With this contact, the baby stays warm through the mother's body heat, which prevents hypothermia, helps in the adaptation of the fetal-neonatal transition and favors the colonization of the newborn's intestine by microorganisms from the maternal skin flora, providing to the neonate greater immunity<sup>1</sup>.



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strengthen the conclusions reached in the knowledge of the topic being studied. The researcher must organize and summarize the information, generating a database that is easy to access and manage<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Step 4: Evaluation of studies included in the integrative literature review**

In this step, data analysis is performed, like data analysis of a conventional investigation. To ensure the validation of the review, the selected studies must be analyzed rigorously and in detail, seeking explanations for contradictory or different results<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Step 5: Interpretation of results**

This step consists of discussing the main results of conventional research, in which the researcher makes a comparison between the results of the critical evaluation of the studies, including theoretical knowledge and highlighting the conclusions and implications resulting from the integrative review. With this, it is possible to identify existing gaps, allowing suggestions for future research to be raised<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Step 6: Presentation of the knowledge review/synthesis**

At this stage, a document is prepared that must contain a description of the steps taken by the researcher and the main evidence that was found during the analysis of the studies<sup>5</sup>.

The integrative review aims to present sufficient information, so that the reader can assess the relevance of the procedures used in carrying out the review, the topics covered and the description of the studies included<sup>5</sup>.

Thus, the integrative review research was developed based on the guiding question: "What is the importance of breastfeeding in the newborn's first hour of life?".

Conducted through online searches in LILACS, SciELO, Medline and BDNF databases, using the descriptors "Breastfeeding", "Postpartum period", "Maternity wards", "Maternal and child health services" and "Newborn".

After performing the data collection, the inclusion criteria for this study were used: articles in Portuguese, published within the last five years, available in full through electronic access. And the exclusion criteria: dissertations, duplications, which did not answer the guiding question and review articles.

Thus, the articles were pre-selected during the searches in the databases, through an objective and superficial reading, looking only for studies that were within the theme and that met the inclusion and exclusion criteria that were already established. Afterwards, a more detailed and rigorous reading of the studies was carried out to select those who answered the guiding question and met the inclusion criteria.

Thus, 12 articles were selected that corresponded to the topic addressed.

In this context, the safest, most effective, and complete way to achieve adequate growth and development of a child is to guarantee breastfeeding from the first hour of extrauterine life<sup>1</sup>.

The objective was to identify in the scientific literature the importance of breastfeeding in the newborn's first hour of life.

### **Methodology**

It is an integrative literature review research, being carried out following the six stages of elaboration, they are: 1<sup>o</sup> Identification of the theme and selection of hypotheses or research question for the elaboration of the integrative review; 2<sup>nd</sup> establishment of criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of studies/sampling or literature search; 3<sup>rd</sup> definition of the information to be extracted from the studies; 4<sup>th</sup> evaluation of the studies included in the integrative review; 5<sup>th</sup> interpretation of results; 6<sup>th</sup> presentation of the knowledge review/synthesis<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Step 1: Identification of the theme and selection of hypotheses or research question for the elaboration of the integrative review**

Integrative review begins with defining a problem and formulating a hypothesis or research question that is relevant to the area being studied. This step is considered a guide for a well-designed integrative review, as it is associated with logical reasoning, and the subject must be defined in a clear and objective way, making the analysis to be carried out completely. The well-defined question will facilitate the definition of descriptors and the search for related studies<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Step 2: Establishment of inclusion and exclusion criteria for studies/sampling or literature Search**

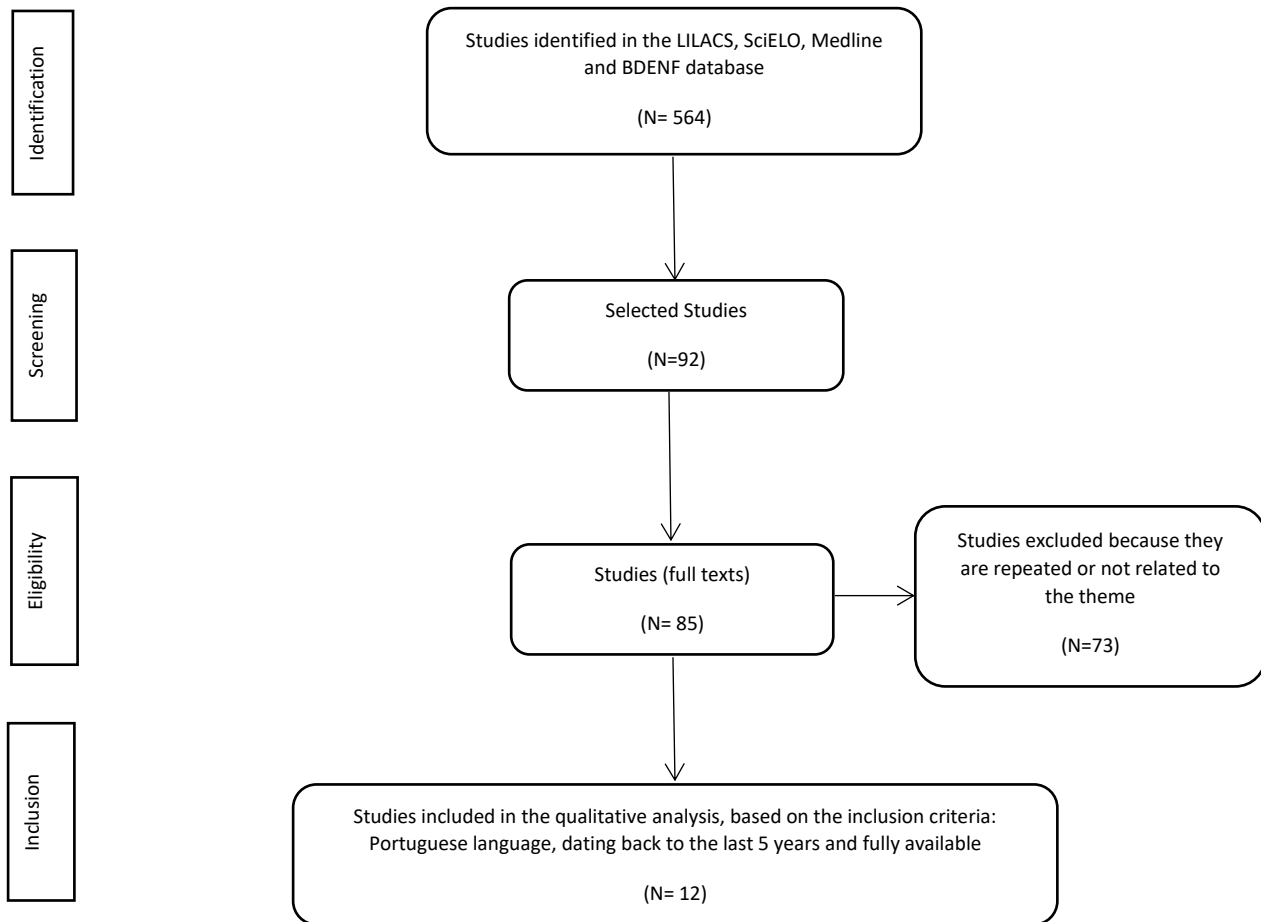
This step is related to the previous step, in which a broad and diversified database search is carried out, searching in electronic databases, manual search in journals, references described in selected studies, contact with researchers and the use of material not published. Making it have a validity in the research, allowing the conclusions to be reliable and broad. Thus, all decisions taken consider the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the studies, which are justified in the review methodology. At this stage of the integrative literature review, it must be fully documented, including inclusion and exclusion criteria, descriptors used, query databases, search strategies, so that it is possible to determine the relevant primary research<sup>5</sup>.

#### **Step 3: Definition of information to be extracted from selected studies / categorization of studies**

This step consists of defining the information to be extracted from the studies that were selected, using an instrument to gather and synthesize the key instruments. The evidence from the selected studies must be evaluated to determine the confidence in the use of the results and to



Figure 1. Flowchart of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of references. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2020



Results

It can be seen in Figure 2, the synoptic table of the articles selected for the elaboration of this integrative review, contemplating the following variables: year of

publication, authors, title, and objective(s). And in Figure 3, there is the presence of a synoptic table of the articles selected for the composition of the study, containing the title and synthesis of the results.

Figure 2. Synoptic table of selected articles containing year of publication, author and objectives. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2020

YEAR OF PUBLICATION	AUTHORS	TITLE	GOAL (S)
August/2016	LEITE, Maura Fernanda Ferreira da Silva; BARBOSA, Priscila Araújo; OLIVINDO, Dean Douglas Ferreira de; XIMENEZ, Valessa de Lima. <sup>9</sup>	Promotion of breastfeeding in the newborn's first hour of life by nursing professionals.	To describe and analyze the perception of postpartum women about the encouragement of breastfeeding in the first hour of life by nursing professionals in a public maternity hospital.
June/2016	SAMPAIO, Ádila Roberta Rocha; BOUSQUAT, Aylene; BARROS, Claudia. <sup>13</sup>	Skin-to-skin contact at birth: a challenge for the promotion of breastfeeding in a public maternity hospital in Northeast Brazil with the title of Hospital Amigo da Criança.	Identify the prevalence of compliance with the fourth step of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (IHAC) – placing babies in skin-to-skin contact with their mothers immediately after delivery, for at least half an hour – in a public maternity hospital in Northeast Brazil.
November/ 2017	ROCHA, Letícia Braga; ARAÚJO, Fellipe Marques da Silva; ROCHA, Naira Coutinho Oliveira; ALMEIDA, Cristiano Dantas de; SANTOS, Miriam Oliveira dos; ROCHA, Carlos Henrique Roriz da. <sup>6</sup>	Breastfeeding in the first hour of life: a literature review.	Highlight the benefits of breastfeeding in the first hour of life, in relation to the infant morbidity and mortality rate.
February/ 2017	ANTUNES, Marcos Benatti; DEMITTO, Marcela de Oliveira; SOARES, Larissa Gramazio; RADOVANOVIC, Cremilde Aparecida	Breastfeeding in the first hour of life: knowledge and practice of the multidisciplinary team.	To verify the knowledge and practice about breastfeeding in the first hour of life among members of the multidisciplinary team of a hospital in the city of Maringá, Paraná.



	Trindade; HIRAGASHI, Ieda Harumi; ICHISATO, Sueli Mutsumi Tsukuda; PELLOSO Sandra Marisa. <sup>14</sup>		
<b>September/2017</b>	SANTOS, Rayra Pereira Burity; ARAÚJO, Rosália Teixeira; TEIXEIRA, Marizete Argolo; RIBEIRO, Vivian Mara; LOPES, Alana Silva; ARAÚJO, Vanessa Matos. <sup>8</sup>	Importance of colostrum for the health of the newborn: perception of mothers.	Understand the perception of postpartum women about the importance of colostrum for the health of the newborn and provide educational care to postpartum women and their families about the importance of colostrum.
<b>January/2019</b>	SILVA, Juliane Lima Pereira da; LINHARES, Francisca Márcia Pereira; BARROS, Amanda de Almeida; SOUZA, Auricarla Gonçalves de; ALVES, Danielle Santos; ANDRADE, Priscila de Oliveira Nascimento. <sup>10</sup>	Factors associated with breastfeeding in the first hour of life in a Baby-Friendly Hospital.	Evaluate the factors associated with the practice of breastfeeding in the first hour postpartum.
<b>November/2019</b>	RAMALHO, Alanderson Alves; MARTINS, Fernanda Andrade; LIMA, Thaíla Alves dos Santos; ANDRADE, Andréia Moreira, KOIFMAN, Rosalina Jorge. <sup>12</sup>	Factors associated with breastfeeding in the first hour of life in Rio Branco, Acre.	To determine the prevalence and analyze the factors associated with breastfeeding in the first hour of life in Rio Branco, Acre.
<b>June/2020</b>	RODRIGUES, Cristina dos Santos de Freitas; SANTOS, Bianca Zimmerman dos; LIPINSKI, Jussara; COSTENARO, Regina Gema Santini; ZAMBERLAN, Cláudia. <sup>15</sup>	Exclusive breastfeeding in the first hour of life: an integrative review.	Investigate the scientific evidence on exclusive breastfeeding in the first hour of life.
<b>October/2020</b>	JUNG, Silvana Mendes; RODRIGUEZ, Fernanda Araujo; HERBER, Silvani. <sup>16</sup>	Skin-to-skin contact and breastfeeding: puerperal experiences	Describe the experiences of postpartum women regarding skin-to-skin contact with the newborn, performed in the first hour of life and the beginning of breastfeeding.
<b>November/2020</b>	JESUS, Alyne Santana de; SANTOS, Monyelle Yonara Ferreira; SANTOS, José Marcos de Jesus; FREITAS, Carla Kalline Alves Cartaxo; MENDES, Rosemar Barbosa; LEITE, Adriana Moraes; RODRIGUES, Iellen Dantas Campos Verdes. <sup>7</sup>	Breastfeeding in the first hour of life among women in Northeastern Brazil: prevalence and associated factors.	Identify the prevalence and factors associated with breastfeeding in the first hour of life.
<b>February/2020</b>	SENA, Rafaela Pereira de; SOUZA, Gabriela Nascimento de; MONTEIRO, Luiza Alessandra Oliveira; SOUZA, Yenne Patrícia Rodrigues de; SANTOS, Yves de Luka Miranda dos; ARAÚJO, Maria Rute de Souza; SILVA, Silvia Cristina Santos da; SILVA, Rodrigo Maia da; PARENTE, Jorgeany Soares. <sup>11</sup>	Educational action for pregnant women to promote the "Golden Hour": experience report.	To report the experience of the educational activity for pregnant women in the promotion of Golden Hour, held in a Family Health Strategy (ESF), in the city of Belém-PA.
<b>November/2020</b>	TERRA, Nathália Oliveira; GÓES, Fernanda Garcia Bezerra; SOUZA, Andressa Neto; LEDO, Beatriz Cabral; CAMPOS, Brenda Lucas; BARCELLOS, Thamires Myrena Torres. <sup>17</sup>	Factors involved in breastfeeding adherence in the first hour of life: an integrative review.	To analyze scientific evidence in the health area about the intervening factors in breastfeeding the newborn in the first hour of life in the hospital environment.

Figure 3. Synoptic table of selected articles containing title and results. São Paulo, SP, Brazil, 2021

TITLE	SUMMARY OF RESULTS
Promotion of breastfeeding in the newborn's first hour of life by nursing professionals.	The perception of pregnant women in relation to the benefits of breastfeeding was evidenced, such as: feelings such as affection and love, strengthening the bond between the binomial and the importance of colostrum as an immunological protector.



<b>Skin-to-skin contact at birth: a challenge for the promotion of breastfeeding in a public maternity hospital in Northeast Brazil with the title of Hospital Amigo da Criança.</b>	Low adherence to the fourth step of the BFHI was observed throughout the national territory, especially in the Northeast region, in which newborns have little chance of being breastfed in the first hour of life, this fact is associated with the exorbitant rate of the number of cesarean sections and the lack of information during prenatal care to pregnant women about breastfeeding.
<b>Breastfeeding in the first hour of life: a literature review.</b>	Breastfeeding in the first hour of life helps in the mother-infant bond and in the extension of breastfeeding, as well as acting by promoting a protective factor arising from colostrum with the potential to reduce about 22% of neonatal mortality, ensuring an improvement in the overall health condition of the child.
<b>Breastfeeding in the first hour of life: knowledge and practice of the multidisciplinary team.</b>	The health professionals interviewed demonstrated to recognize the benefits of early breastfeeding, but they have difficulties in adhering to this act for reasons of prevalence of cesarean delivery, reduction of professionals, lack of rooming-in, fragmented nursing care, which distances the mother from the newborn.
<b>Importance of colostrum for the health of the newborn: perception of mothers.</b>	Colostrum plays a role in meeting the needs of newborns, as it is composed of fat-soluble vitamins such as E, A and K, proteins, calcium, potassium, in addition to promoting the production of antibodies, being described and recognized by mothers as a natural vaccine.
<b>Factors associated with breastfeeding in the first hour of life in a Baby-Friendly Hospital.</b>	Breastfeeding while still in the delivery room helps regulate cardiorespiratory, thermal, blood glucose levels and extrauterine adaptation of the newborn. In addition to early sucking, it stimulates the release of oxytocin and prolactin, increasing milk production. The presence of a nurse in the delivery room, weight equal to or greater than 3000 grams, and skin-to-skin contact were identified as factors that support breastfeeding in the first hour of life.
<b>Factors associated with breastfeeding in the first hour of life in Rio Branco, Acre.</b>	The practice of breastfeeding in the first hour of life helps to promote, protect and support breastfeeding. It was shown that the main risk factors associated with not breastfeeding immediately after delivery are cesarean section and low birth weight.
<b>Exclusive breastfeeding in the first hour of life: an integrative review.</b>	It was identified that breastfeeding in the first hour of life favors the strengthening of affective bonds between the mother and her newborn. In addition, breastfeeding helps the baby's extrauterine adaptation.
<b>Skin-to-skin contact and breastfeeding: puerperal experiences.</b>	The importance of immediate breastfeeding was addressed as a way to establish a link between the binomial, immunity and improvement in the baby's nutritional status, as well as helping in the maternal physical and mental conditions. However, studies show that such an act is not encouraged or performed.
<b>Breastfeeding in the first hour of life among women in Northeastern Brazil: prevalence and associated factors.</b>	Factors such as the desire to have a child, adequate prenatal care and prior guidance on the benefits of breastfeeding favor the initiation of breastfeeding in the first hour of life. Meanwhile, inadequate prenatal care, cesarean section and lack of rooming-in favor late breastfeeding.
<b>Educational action for pregnant women to promote the "Golden Hour": experience report.</b>	In an active methodology, the principles of "Golden Hour" were addressed, including timely clamping and skin-to-skin contact, emphasizing the importance of breastfeeding in the first hour of life, as it offers nutrients and prevents the newborn from infectious diseases.
<b>Factors involved in breastfeeding adherence in the first hour of life: an integrative review.</b>	Early breastfeeding increases the frequency and duration of exclusive breastfeeding, reduces infant mortality and is the fourth step in the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative. However, maternal and neonatal factors, institutional and professional practices directly influence breastfeeding in the first hour of life.

With the analysis and thorough reading of the articles selected for the composition and execution of the integrative review, it is possible to build a summary table containing the most important variables (Figure 2 and 3). In which, based on the synthesis of the results presented in the analyzed studies, it was possible to identify the benefits of breastfeeding in the newborn's first hour of life.

### Discussion

From the analysis of selected studies, it can be observed that the benefits of breastfeeding in the first hour of life are numerous and scientifically proven. According to a study<sup>6</sup>, early breastfeeding offers the mother-infant binomial several advantages, such as a considerable reduction in the neonatal mortality rate, thus ensuring an improvement in the child's overall health. According to authors<sup>7</sup>, Breastfeeding in the First Hour of Life is highlighted and recommended by the WHO, as it is the capacity for interaction between newborns (NB) with their mothers in the first minutes of life and is part of the priority strategies for promotion, protection and support for breastfeeding.

Colostrum, also known as the first milk, that the newborn has contact when sucking the breast of its mother, is characterized by being a viscous and yellowish milk, coming from the alveoli. As it has several necessary properties that meet the baby's needs. Its composition contains fat-soluble vitamins such as E, A and K, rich in proteins, in addition to containing sodium, calcium and potassium. The immunological protection provided by colostrum that confers the production of antibodies is highlighted, being recognized by many pregnant women and professionals as a "natural vaccine"<sup>6,8</sup>.

Among the psychic benefits we can point out the establishment of the maternal-infant bond and the exchange of affectionate feelings such as love, affection, and trust between them, which helps to extend breastfeeding exclusively afterwards. Among the physiological benefits, it is observed that breastfeeding is still in the first hour of life, valuing the "Golden Hour". In addition to assisting in the extrauterine adaptation of the newborn by promoting glycemic regulation and helping the cardiorespiratory system<sup>9-11</sup>.



Ramiro NCMP, Pereira MS, Souza RS, Chaparin BRM, Navarro BVA, Aver LA presence of rooming-in, nursing care encompassing the mother-infant binomial, the presence of prior guidance on the benefits of breastfeeding, and the desire and planning of pregnancy. However, inadequate prenatal care, cesarean section, insufficient number of professionals, lack of rooming-in, low birth weight and lack of information of the pregnant woman are cited as factors that hinder the practice of breastfeeding in the first after the childbirth<sup>7,10,13,18</sup>.

### Conclusion

Based on the studies presented, we can conclude that breastfeeding in the first hour of life is extremely important, generating several benefits such as a significant reduction in the neonatal mortality rate, immunological protection through the production of antibodies from colostrum, also known as "vaccine "natural", establish the maternal-infant bond, the exchange of feelings between the mother and the newborn, promotes the regulation of blood glucose and helps the cardiorespiratory system, and thus helps in the extrauterine adaptation of the newborn. An important benefit for the mother is the production of oxytocin, reducing the risk of developing bleeding and other complications. However, for this to be done, it is important to ensure that conditions are favorable, since, in some cases, the mother and baby are not ready or do not have the conditions to carry out breastfeeding.

It is noteworthy that when the NB performs breast suction, the hypothalamus is stimulated to produce oxytocin, oxytocin is a hormone that helps in uterine contraction, thus reducing maternal blood loss after childbirth and, consequently, have a lower risk of developing hemorrhage, anemia, among other complications. If the NB sucks the breast before the placenta leaves, the oxytocin released by breastfeeding can accelerate the placental discharge, in addition to helping the "descending of the milk"<sup>11</sup>.

It is pointed out that not every newborn is ready to suckle immediately after delivery, or not every mother is ready to breastfeed immediately after delivery, however, it is important that this NB is placed in direct skin-to-skin contact on the abdomen /mother's chest, if both are in good health and if this is what the woman wants. Studies show that skin-to-skin contact right after birth makes the newborn adapt more quickly to extrauterine life, in addition to promoting the mother-infant bond and helping to establish breastfeeding. In addition, this intimate, skin-to-skin contact between mother and child causes the mother to pass on to the baby the microbes on her skin, which will protect her against infections<sup>12</sup>.

There are several protective factors for breastfeeding in the first hour of life, such as: healthy maternal and neonatal conditions, adequate prenatal care,

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