

## NURSING STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ON BREASTFEEDING: INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

Estratégias e ações do enfermeiro no incentivo ao aleitamento materno:  
revisão integrativa

Estrategias y acciones de enfermería en lactancia materna: revisión integrativa

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To identify the strategies and actions used by nurses to encourage breastfeeding. **Method:** integrative review conducted in the databases of the Virtual Health Library, Latin American and Caribbean Scientific and Technical Literature, Nursing Database and Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online, using the descriptors “nursing” AND “breastfeeding” AND “nursing care” AND “health education”, January 2018. **Results:** the study consisted of 14 publications. Two categories emerged: “The practice of health education used by nurses to encourage breastfeeding” and “The promotion of family support as a strategy to encourage breastfeeding”. **Conclusion:** this review showed how the strategies and actions used by nurses to encourage breastfeeding, the promotion of autonomy, health education actions, support network, strengthening the bond, prenatal consultations, guidelines, encouragement of family support. and counseling.

**Descriptors:** Breast feeding, Nursing care, Health education, Nursing.

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## RESUMO

**Objetivo:** Identificar as estratégias e ações utilizadas pelo enfermeiro no incentivo ao aleitamento materno. **Método:** revisão integrativa realizada nas bases de dados da Biblioteca Virtual da Saúde, da Literatura Científica e Técnica da América Latina e Caribe, Base de Dados de Enfermagem e Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online, por meio dos descritores “enfermagem” AND “aleitamento materno” AND “cuidados de enfermagem” AND “educação em saúde”, em janeiro de 2018. **Resultados:** o estudo foi composto por 14 publicações. Emergiu duas categorias: “A prática de educação em saúde utilizada por enfermeiros no incentivo ao aleitamento materno” e “A promoção do apoio familiar como estratégia de incentivo ao aleitamento materno”. **Conclusão:** esta revisão evidenciou como estratégias e ações utilizadas pelo enfermeiro no incentivo ao aleitamento materno, a promoção da autonomia, ações de educação em saúde, rede de apoio, fortalecimento do vínculo, consultas de pré-natal, orientações, incentivo ao apoio familiar e aconselhamento.

**Descritores:** Aleitamento materno, Cuidados de enfermagem, Educação em saúde, Enfermagem.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Identificar las estrategias y acciones utilizadas por las enfermeras para fomentar la lactancia materna. **Método:** revisión integral realizada en las bases de datos de la Biblioteca Virtual en Salud, Literatura Científica y Técnica de América Latina y el Caribe, Base de Datos de Enfermería y Análisis de Literatura Médica y Sistema de Recuperación en línea, utilizando los descriptores “enfermería” Y “lactancia materna” Y “atención de enfermería” Y “educación sanitaria”, enero de 2018. **Resultados:** el estudio consistió en 14 publicaciones. Surgieron dos categorías: “La práctica de la educación sanitaria utilizada por las enfermeras para fomentar la lactancia materna” y “La promoción del apoyo familiar como una estrategia para fomentar la lactancia materna”. **Conclusión:** Esta revisión mostró cómo las estrategias y acciones utilizadas por las enfermeras para fomentar la lactancia materna, la promoción de la autonomía, las acciones de educación para la salud, la red de apoyo, el fortalecimiento del vínculo, las consultas prenatales, las pautas, el estímulo del apoyo familiar y asesoramiento.

**Descriptores:** Lactancia materna, Atención de enfermería, Educación en salud, enfermería.

## INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is the process by which the infant receives milk from its mother. It is considered the most effective natural bonding, affection and protection strategy for children and is the most sensitive, economical and effective intervention to reduce infant morbidity and mortality, and its maintenance is vital for the good development of the newborn.<sup>1</sup>

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health (MOH), breastfeeding should occur exclusively until the first six months of the baby's life, after this period, breastfeeding should be supplemented until two years or more. Thus, the MS emphasizes that there is no advantage in starting complementary foods before six months, and may even harm the child's health, as the early introduction of other foods is associated with

problems such as increased episodes of diarrhea and risk of malnutrition.<sup>1</sup>

From this perspective, it is possible to state that breastfeeding is one of the most efficient ways to meet the nutritional, immunological and psychological aspects of children in their first year of life, being a natural and effective practice that favors the mother-child bond when breastfeeding is well experienced by mothers.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, it is up to the health professional to identify and understand the process of breastfeeding in its socio-cultural and family context and, from this understanding, guide the family on the importance of adopting a healthy practice. This professional must be prepared to provide effective and comprehensive care that respects the knowledge and life history of each woman and helps her overcome fears, difficulties and insecurities.<sup>3</sup>

The nurse is considered to be a professional indicated to exercise the orientation approach regarding breastfeeding, as it is linked to the woman during the pregnancy-puerperal cycle, through a long follow-up process that begins in the prenatal period, continuing the postpartum period after hospital discharge.<sup>4</sup>

Nurses play an important role in carrying out actions in individualized care, with easy-to-understand communication, with resources that facilitate the understanding of the importance of breastfeeding, through workshops, educational lectures, videos, group activities aimed at the exchange of information and experiences, seeking the sum of knowledge, minimizing doubts, difficulties and possible complications.<sup>5</sup>

Knowing the importance of the encouragement and promotion of breastfeeding and knowing the broad formation and field of action of Nursing, this study aims to identify the strategies and actions used by nurses in encouraging breastfeeding.

## METHODS

The study is an integrative literature review that aims to answer the guiding question: “what are the strategies and actions used by nurses in encouraging breastfeeding?”

Review is one of the research methods that allows the incorporation of evidence into clinical practice. The method aims to gather and synthesize research results on a delimited theme or issue, in a systematic and orderly manner, contributing to the deepening of knowledge.<sup>6</sup>

The integrative literature review consists of building a broad literature analysis, contributing to discussions about research methods and results, as well as reflections on future studies. This review is divided into six phases, which are: the definition of the research question and objectives of the review; establishment of inclusion criteria of articles (sample selection), reading of titles; reading of abstracts, selection of information to be extracted from the selected studies; analysis of results; interpretation and discussion of

the results. The last stage was the presentation of the review in the format of a scientific paper.<sup>7</sup>

To survey the articles to be used, a search was performed in the databases of the Virtual Health Library: BDNF (Nursing Database) and MEDLINE (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online) and the Electronic Scientific Library LILACS (Scientific and Technical Literature of the Latin America and the Caribbean) through the search strategy: “nursing” and “breastfeeding” and “nursing care” and “health education” in January 2018.

The search for articles was performed by online access and the following inclusion criteria were adopted: full text, free, full online availability, scientific articles published in Portuguese, English or Spanish. Exclusion criteria were: editorials, reflection articles, book chapters, repeated studies and not addressing the researched theme.

Initially, the titles and abstracts of the articles were considered for selection, incomplete abstracts were discarded, and, finally, a reading of the full article was performed.

As this was a review research, this study was not submitted to an Ethics and Research Committee, but all ethical aspects provided for by the Brazilian Association of Technical Standards (ABNT) were respected, referring to all the authors, besides the content of the The texts used were approached in order to maintain the originality of the studies.

## RESULTS

After a pre-analysis of the total of 169 references obtained, 155 publications were excluded, being 43 without texts available online, 83 excluded after reading the titles, 27 excluded after reading the abstracts, 02 excluded after reading the full article, as shown in the figure below (FIGURE 1).

**Figure 1:** Presentation of selection after application of exclusion and inclusion criteria. Belo Horizonte (MG), Brazil, 2018.

Database	Found	Available online	Selected by title	Selected by abstract	Analyzed articles
LILACS	72	44	22	10	8
MEDLINE	49	49	18	2	2
BDNF	48	33	13	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>

Afterwards, the articles that met the inclusion criteria were organized in a synoptic table, including the following items: name of authors / year of publication, database, title, approach / type of research. The studies were numbered with the letter A (Articles) and a numerical sequence, for the sake of organization (FIGURE 2).

**Figure 2.** Distribution of studies according to authors / year of publication, database, title, approach / type of research. Belo Horizonte (MG), Brazil, 2018.

Article	Name of the authors/ Year published	Databas e	Title	Approach/Type e of research
A1	BULHOSA, M.S et al., 2007	LILACS	Promotion of breastfeeding by the nursing staff in a child-friendly hospital	Ethnographic method
A2	SKUPIEN, S.V; RAVELLI, A.P.X; ACAUAN, L.V, 2016	LILACS	Postpartum Nursing Consultation: Prevention of Breast Complications	Qualitative / Descriptive and exploratory study
A3	LEAL, C.C.G et al., 2016	LILACS	Nursing practice in promoting breastfeeding of Brazilian adolescents	Qualitative / descriptive study
A4	ANDRADE, R.D et al., 2015	LILACS	Fatores related to saúde da mulher no puerpério and repercussões na saúde da criança	Qualitative / descriptive study
A5	MAZZA, V.A et al., 2014	LILACS	Influence of social support networks for adolescent nourishment not amamentação	Quantitative / Exploratory study
A6	DODT, R.C.M et al., 2013	LILACS	Influence of strategy of education in saúde mediated by serial album on maternal self-efficacy to breastfeed	Qualitative / Pre-experimental study of pre-test / post-test model
A7	OLIVEIRA, A.S.S et al., 2013	LILACS	Childcare consultation conducted by nurses in the family health strategy	Qualitative / Observational and descriptive study
A8	TAKEMOTO, A.Y et al., 2011	LILACS	Preparation and support to the teenage mother for breastfeeding practice	Qualitative / Descriptive and exploratory study
A9	SHIMODA, G.T; SILVA, I.A, 2010	BDEFN	Health needs of breastfeeding women	Qualitative / Descriptive Study
A10	TAMARA, L.B, et al., 2017	BDEFN	Support received by teenage mothers in the breastfeeding process	Qualitative / Field Study, Descriptive, Exploratory
A11	BATISTA, M.R et al., 2017	BDEFN	Health professionals 'guidelines on breastfeeding: the mothers' perspective	Quantitative / Descriptive Study

A12	MONTEIRO, E.M.L et al., 2011	BDEF	Maternal breastfeeding in the penitentiary system	Qualitative / Descriptive Study
A13	FERNÁNDEZA,S.B et al., 2012	MEDLIN E	Reflections on Group Activity in Primary Care	Quantitative / Descriptive Study
A14	EKSTRÖM, A; KYLBERG, E; NISSEN, E 2012	MEDLIN E	A process-oriented breastfeeding training program for health professionals to promote breastfeeding: an intervention study	Qualitative / Intervention Study

The analysis of nurses' strategies and actions, focusing on the encouragement of breastfeeding, directed the development of the results of this study. Of the publications analyzed, two (14%) were in MEDLINE, eight (57%) in LILACS and four (29%) in BDEF. The year with the highest publication was 2015, with four (33.33%) articles. As for the place of publication, 12 (86%) were produced in Brazil, one (7%) in Sweden, one (7%) in Spain. Among the articles, three (21%) were published in an international journal and 11 (79%) in a national journal. The articles selected in this review are sourced from 12 different types of journals, with the largest publications being the *Cogitare Nursing Journal* and the *Nursing Journal of the Federal University of Pernambuco online*, both with two (14%) articles each.

The year of publication of the selected articles that met the inclusion criteria comprises a period from 2007 to 2017, with one (7%) article from 2007, one (7%) published in 2010, two (14%) from 2011, two (14%) from 2012, two (14%) from 2013, one (7%) from 2014, one (7%) from 2015, two (14%) from 2016 and two (14%) articles of the year 2017.

According to the type of methodological approach used, the 14 articles made use of the qualitative approach, thus, it is considered that (100%) of the publications presented evidence level 6, considering that such studies do not present strong evidence for the application clinic.

From the analysis of the studies, the strategies and actions used by nurses to encourage breastfeeding were shown to promote autonomy<sup>8</sup>, health education actions<sup>9-16</sup>, support network<sup>9-10</sup>, strengthening the bond<sup>8-11, 13</sup>, prenatal consultations<sup>10</sup>, guidance<sup>10,17</sup>, encouragement of family support<sup>8-10,12-13,18-20</sup> and counseling<sup>21</sup>.

For the critical analysis of the selected studies, the work was categorized by content similarity, and two categories were constructed for the analysis: "The practice of health education used by nurses to encourage breastfeeding" and "The encouragement of family support as breastfeeding incentive strategy".

### The practice of health education used by nurses to encourage breastfeeding

Health Education (ES) is defined by the MOH as an educational process of building health knowledge that contributes to increasing the autonomy of people in their care in order to achieve health care according to their needs.<sup>22</sup> This practice, it must be founded on the principle of the plurality of knowledge as a device for mutual exchange and the reconstruction of knowledge.

In breastfeeding, the actions of SSc have been presenting satisfactory results, capable of positively modifying the sense of self-efficacy. These actions may be allied to various strategies such as guidance through video, leaflets and home visits.<sup>12</sup>

In a study in 2013 by the Federal University of Piauí (UFPI), it was found that higher education actions are performed by nurses more frequently during prenatal and childcare consultations and the most addressed subjects were the maintenance of breastfeeding. Maternal care followed by guidance on child hygiene.<sup>13</sup> Given this, it is possible to identify that SS is an action used by nursing professionals as an educational practice of prevention and guidance in breastfeeding.

Besides the nursing consultation, another opportune space for higher education is the group of pregnant women, as they are useful spaces for the clarification of doubts and support for breastfeeding. In this space, a multiprofessional team can provide guidance by strengthening the mother-child bond and family and encouraging breastfeeding<sup>10</sup>.

Given the above, it is possible to state that the practice of higher education promotes the bond between the nurse and the family. This is so reciprocal that when it is concluded, it is not clear who played what role. Thus, the forms of communication should be improved in order to ensure continuity of care, implementing educational strategies that emphasize the practice of exclusive breastfeeding until six months of age, as well as the introduction of adequate complementary feeding and the maintenance of breastfeeding up to two years of age at least.<sup>24</sup>

The promotion of family support as a breastfeeding incentive strategy

It is undeniable that breastfeeding is not an easy practice, as this act is often strongly influenced by society, that is, the sociocultural context overlaps the biological determinants involved in breastfeeding.<sup>8</sup> Thus, family support implies a fundamental pillar for health actions and encouragement of breastfeeding. Through family support and encouragement, it is possible to optimize outcomes, reduce the desire of the nursing mother and improve her understanding of breastfeeding.<sup>25</sup>

Family participation in the promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding is paramount for the persistence of women in breastfeeding, so people living with this woman should provide a peaceful and comfortable environment that favors the bond between the mother.<sup>12</sup>

In this context, it is important that the professional nurse promotes with the family, the guidelines on

breastfeeding, as well as involving them in health education practices with the purpose of promoting the breastfeeding incentive, demystifying concepts and beliefs that may harm adherence and maintenance of breastfeeding.<sup>20</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

With this study, it was possible to identify that the strategies and actions used by nurses in encouraging breastfeeding, promoting autonomy, support network, strengthening the bond, prenatal consultations, counseling, counseling, encouragement of family support and health education actions, the last two being more prevalent in the studies analyzed.

It is noteworthy that most studies have actions and strategies to encourage breastfeeding in primary care, there were few studies found at the hospital level. Thus, there is a need to carry out studies that seek to identify the strategies and actions performed by tertiary care nurses, that is, in hospitals.

With this study, it is evident that the role of nurses in encouraging and supporting breastfeeding is essential, but it is necessary that this action occurs to include other professionals in this process, with a view to strengthening the mother / baby care network.

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