

## **The effect of the odour of mother's milk on breastfeeding behaviour of premature neonates.**

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*Acta Paediatr*, March 1, 2007; 96(3): 368-71.

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**AIM:** To assess the effects of exposure to the odour of mother's milk on breastfeeding behaviour of premature neonates. **METHODS:** Thirteen preterm infants born at 30-33 weeks gestational age were tested. Seven infants were randomly assigned to the milk-odour condition, 6 to the water-control condition. During week 35 post-conceptual age, each baby was exposed to the appropriate odour stimulus for 120 sec. on 5 consecutive days immediately prior to a breastfeeding attempt. The breastfeeding bout following the final odour exposure session, and a second breastfeeding session shortly before the baby left the hospital, were analysed. Babies were weighed before and after each feeding session. **RESULTS:** During each breastfeeding session, babies in the milk-odour condition displayed longer sucking bouts and more bursts composed of >7 sucking movements, and also consumed more milk than the Control infants. The time spent in the hospital was significantly less for the milk-odour condition (median = 43 days vs. 55.5 days for Controls). **CONCLUSION:** Brief exposure to the odour of mother's milk prior to early breastfeeding trials had a positive effect on sucking behaviour and milk ingestion of preterm babies, which in turn resulted in a shortened stay in the hospital.

Publication Types:

- Journal article
- Randomized controlled trial

MeSH Terms:

- Adult
- Breast Feeding\*
- Female
- Humans
- Infant, Newborn
- Infant, Premature\*
- Milk, Human\*
- Odors\*
- Sucking Behavior\*