



Press Information

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Mother's Smart Choice programme helps mothers take charge of kids' health

Petaling Jaya, Malaysia – Appropriate feeding practices are essential for growth, nutrition, development and survival of infants and young children. When breast milk is no longer enough to meet the nutritional needs of an infant, complementary food should be added to their diet. With the launch of the Mother's Smart Choice (MSC) programme in 2011, it has entered its second phase today in nurturing future generation of healthy Malaysians.

MSC is an effort put together with the Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM), the Malaysian Paediatric Association (MPA), the Obstetrical & Gynaecological Society of Malaysia (OGSM) and also the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN). Mother's Smart Choice is also supported by Philips AVENT Malaysia.

The transition from exclusive breastfeeding (phase 1) to complementary feeding (phase 2), typically covers the period from six to 12 months of age – and is a very vulnerable period. Superior nutrition is essentially important for the baby to be always in the good of health.

According to Dr. Tee E. Siong, Chairman of the Nutrition Society of Malaysia, "Complementary feeding describes the offering of solid food alongside breast milk to infants from six months. It is important because breast milk alone cannot provide all the nutrients and energy needed by the infant at this age. Mothers should offer their infant appropriate complementary food so that the infant will continue to receive the nutrients and energy needed to grow and thrive."

Due to the programme crossing the threshold into the second phase, MSC continues to implement activities, which would complement the government's efforts of nurturing future generations of healthy children. During the first phase and to support further efforts of cultivating a breastfeeding culture, MSC published a free guidebook *Breastfeed with Confidence* to 50 hospitals and have distributed 11,000 copies to date.

Mr Naeem Shahab Khan, Managing Director of Philips Malaysia Sdn Bhd, further explained that, "The complementary feeding phase is a fun learning time for infants. Parents who listen to their baby's messages help develop a responsive feeding relationship. Through our AVENT line, Philips has an extensive range of feeding utensils and convenient kitchen implements to help mothers practice complementary feeding even easier. We will continue to improve our products through extensive research and development at our world-class facilities at both Philips Research and AVENT, thereby ensuring that mothers of today and tomorrow will continue to find our products useful."

Nutrition interventions during this period can lead to great benefits. Feeding practices appropriate for the child's age, nutritionally adequate foods, and continued breastfeeding can ensure optimal growth and development.



Dr Tee explained that complementary feeding should be timely, meaning that all infants should start receiving foods in addition to breast milk from six months onwards. It should be adequate – where foods should be given in amounts, frequency, consistency and using a variety of foods to cover the needs of a growing child whilst maintaining breastfeeding.

Philips AVENT added that nutritional food should be prepared and given in a safe manner – taking all measures to minimize the risk of contamination with pathogens. More importantly, foods prepared should be given in the way that is appropriate to the child consuming the food, including the texture for the child to consume their meal.

“Too little variety can cause poor dietary quality in a child’s feeding habits – which can lead to inadequate consumption of essential vitamins and minerals like vitamin A, iron, zinc and calcium in a child’s diet. Philips Malaysia is confident of the program’s success as well as the benefits it will bring to mothers and children of this generation as well as many generations to come,” continued Mr Naeem.

Similar to the first phase of the Programme and to support further efforts of cultivating a complementary feeding culture, MSC has published a free guidebook *Complementary Feeding Confidence* equipped with exciting recipe ideas from renowned chef - Marina Mustafa. Further, the guidebook will be distributed to several hospitals with Klang Valley and contain useful information to help parents’ in the next phase of feeding to ensure their child’s maximum healthy growth.

To raise awareness about the guidebook, MSC will produce educational posters with information on how to obtain this guidebook, to be placed a hospitals and clinics in the nation.