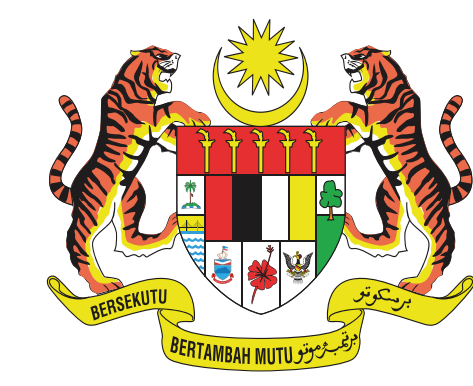


BREASTFEEDING SITUATION IN MALAYSIA

Findings of National Health and Morbidity Survey 2022 (NHMS): Maternal and Child Health

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INTRODUCTION

- The first 2 years of a child's life are particularly important, as optimal nutrition during this period lowers morbidity and mortality, reduces the risk of chronic disease, and fosters better development overall.
- According to the World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund, breastfeeding should begin within an hour of birth, exclusive breastfeeding for six months and introduction of nutritionally-adequate and safe complementary (solid) foods at 6 months together with continued breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond.
- Breastfeeding enhances cognitive development, decreased incidences of obesity and lowers the risk of other chronic conditions like diabetes, obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, hyperlipidemia, and several forms of cancer (1).

OBJECTIVE

- The purpose of this study is to describe the rate of early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF), ever breastfed and continued breastfeeding until two years old in Malaysia.

METHODOLOGY

- Data on breastfeeding were extracted from the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2022 (Maternal and Child Health).
- This survey was a cross-sectional design with a two-stage stratified cluster sampling.
- Structured questionnaire with face-to-face interview was used for data collection among mothers aged 15-49 years with last childbirth less than two years prior to the survey and their children below five years.
- Data were analysed using SPSS statistics version 28.0

DISCUSSION

- National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) in 2016 reported that the overall prevalence of having ever breastfed was 98.1% , 65.3% of Malaysian women initiating breastfeeding to their child after giving birth within one hour was and the frequency of children still being breastfed by their mothers at two years of age was 39.4%. (2)
- Other local study found that only 31.1 % of the caesarean mothers initiated breastfeeding within one hour while majority of respondents (56.9 %) breastfed their babies between one month to one year, and 31.5% breastfed their babies for more than one year(3)

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that EIBF still can be improved as the findings showed that only 6 in 10 newborn infants have begun breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth and only one in two children continued to breastfeed until 2 years. Promotion on EIBF and to strengthen the support for the mother and spouse to breastfeed exclusively should be continued as per recommended.

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RESULTS

Table 1.0 Prevalence of early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour after birth among children born in the last 24 months .

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Variable	Count	Estimated population	Prevalence % (95%CI)
Malaysia	4295	564712	64.3 (61.11, 67.36)
States			
Johor	165	45252	43.0 (32.22, 54.40)
Kedah	253	30499	44.5 (37.52, 51.67)
Kelantan	331	45231	67.0 (57.16, 75.46)
Melaka	275	14542	57.4 (52.10, 62.59)
Negeri Sembilan	340	24279	82.7 (78.00, 86.56)
Pahang	340	32570	76.5 (71.81, 80.58)
Pulau pinang	261	22523	48.5 (38.41, 58.78)
Perak	313	37795	63.5 (58.46, 68.33)
Perlis	372	5875	76.2 (71.07, 80.72)
Selangor	293	125574	71.4 (59.57, 80.90)
Terengganu	360	32581	73.5 (65.20, 80.42)
Sabah & WP Labuan	317	71715	72.0 (59.78, 81.60)
Sarawak	366	40965	73.5 (67.98, 78.44)
WP Kuala Lumpur & Putrajaya	309	35312	69.9 (64.44, 74.86)
Location			
Urban	3010	395419	63.6 (59.78, 67.31)
Rural	1285	169293	65.9 (60.09, 71.25)
Sex			
Boy	2137	285084	64.2 (60.11, 68.00)
Girl	2158	279628	64.4 (60.83, 67.88)
Age group			
Less than 6 month	869	108421	61.1 (56.53, 65.54)
6-11 month	1105	137631	62.4 (58.27, 66.43)
12-23 month	2321	318660	66.3 (62.23, 70.16)
Ethnicity			
Malay	3424	363986	64.8 (61.77, 67.65)
Chinese	162	62809	56.8 (48.37, 64.80)
Indian	120	19250	56.9 (46.36, 66.79)
Others Bumiputeras	490	72333	77.0 (71.67, 81.64)
Others	98	46254	59.8 (39.10, 77.46)
Citizenship			
Malaysian citizen	4201	522948	64.9 (62.23, 67.42)
Permanent residents or non citizen	93	41683	57.8 (36.46, 76.63)

Table 2.0 Prevalence of continue breastfeeding among children aged 12-23 months

Variable	Count	Estimated population	Prevalence % (95%CI)
Malaysia	1680	229922	50.6 (46.94, 54.25)
States			
Johor	78	20583	40.2 (33.59, 47.29)
Kedah	122	14520	43.4 (36.73, 50.39)
Kelantan	174	23665	68.1 (61.12, 74.42)
Melaka	106	5012	42.9 (34.81, 51.46)
Negeri Sembilan	98	6134	40.6 (32.99, 48.65)
Pahang	154	14915	70.1 (61.95, 77.16)
Pulau pinang	113	10013	39.1 (28.12, 51.35)
Perak	103	12351	45.6 (37.02, 54.38)
Perlis	138	2236	55.8 (48.15, 63.16)
Selangor	120	55612	55.1 (40.98, 68.38)
Terengganu	147	13268	61.6 (54.51, 68.32)
Sabah & WP Labuan	128	30255	57.8 (57.75, 49.19)
Sarawak	74	7948	29.0 (23.30, 35.45)
WP Kuala Lumpur & Putrajaya	125	13410	47.8 (39.25, 56.58)
Location			
Urban	1,149	160910	50.4 (45.60, 55.12)
Rural	531	69012	51.2 (46.24, 56.06)
Sex			
Boy	829	114350	49.0 (43.61, 54.41)
Girl	851	115573	52.3 (47.80, 56.74)
Ethnicity			
Malay	1,425	158246	55.7 (53.11, 58.18)
Chinese	38	15184	27.1 (15.65, 42.61)
Indian	26	3782	22.4 (12.78, 36.31)
Others Bumiputeras	152	24338	50.3 (43.93, 56.59)
Others	39	28372	58.6 (32.53, 80.60)
Citizenship			
Malaysian citizen	1,642	204550	50.0 (47.05, 52.86)
Permanent residents or non citizen	38	25372	56.6 (29.72, 80.04)