



## ***FEEDING PRACTICES OF CHILDREN ADMITTED WITH ACUTE GASTROENTERITIS TO TEACHING HOSPITAL, KARAPITIYA***

Munsira M.M.F1., Abeysinghe H.K.S.1, Husaiq M.I.M.2, Dissanayaka P.S.3  
and De Silva M.D.N.1

1 Teaching Hospital, Karapitiya, Sri Lanka

2 Health Office, Galle, Sri Lanka

3 General Hospital, Kalutara, Sri Lanka

mmfmunsira@gmail.com

Feeding practices during an episode of gastroenteritis is important as proper feeding helps in preventing both short and long term outcomes of a diarrheal illness. Though awareness is done still we see improper practices leading to adverse outcomes. This study was intended to assess the status of feeding practices of children admitted with gastroenteritis to Teaching Hospital, Karapitiya and reasons behind. Study consisted of 2 components; a descriptive cross sectional study to assess the status of feeding practices and a qualitative study (using in depth interviews), to find the reasons behind. A pair of mother and child, which the child is diagnosed to have acute gastroenteritis was considered as a study unit. A pretested interviewer administered questionnaire was used for first component while an interviewer guide was prepared for the interview Items were prepared after a literature search and obtaining opinion from several experts. Feeding practices related to fluid intake, solid diet and breast feeding were separately enumerated. Altogether 394 mother – baby pairs were included for study In study population mean age for mothers was 31.2 (SD 6.4) years, while majority (38.3%) of babies were below 1 year. It was apparent that most of mothers gave more than routine amount of fluid during diarrhea (91.1%) but for solid foods, it was vice versa (82.7% gave less than normal). A large proportion of mothers refrained from giving fish, meat and eggs while canji and soup was the commonest food given. Majority (92.4%) of mothers acknowledged that they gave oral rehydration solution to the child and majority (96.2%) of mothers continued breast feeding even during diarrhea. Believing that inability of digestion and worsening the diarrhea were the main reasons behind restriction of solid foods. Most of mothers gave adequate fluids during diarrheal episodes but restricted solid foods. Giving ORS and continuing breast feeding was satisfactory. Avoiding solid foods and certain high protein food items were few of the wrong believes.

**Keywords:** *Feeding practices, Acute Gastroenteritis, Teaching Hospital, Karapitiya*