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## THE METHOD OF STOPPING PROLONGED LACTATION

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**Abstract.** *Relevance.* When breastfeeding is stopped, an affective attachment to the mother is often noted. In order to solve this problem, a method of gentle cessation of lactation was developed. The basis of the method is objective activity with children older than six months and the beginning of co-creation of mother and child, which contributes to the "emotional restructuring" of the mother, and has an important impact during the period of weaning the child. *Aim.* Development of a method of careful cessation of lactation, which does not have a psycho-traumatic effect on the "mother-child" dyad. *Materials and methods.* Co-creation of mother and child — the method of "infant drawing" (not a method of teaching drawing). Under observation were 47 pairs of "mother-child", who began joint creativity from 6–8 months of a child's life and 30 breastfeeding mothers who want to stop lactation but have psychological difficulties in stopping it. *Results.* A technique has been developed for stopping ongoing breastfeeding, which does not have a psycho-traumatic effect on the "mother-child" dyad. The technique involves the development of contact between mother and child through co-creation, helps to relieve stress in mothers and children during weaning. *Conclusions.* In this situation, co-creation plays the role of a distracting factor that contributes to the transition from communication between mother and child in the process of breastfeeding to communication through creativity, and the earlier it is started (in the first year of life), the higher its effectiveness.

**Key words:** continued breastfeeding; lactation cessation; co-creation of mother and child

## МЕТОДИКА ПРЕКРАЩЕНИЯ ДЛИТЕЛЬНОЙ ЛАКТАЦИИ

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**Резюме.** *Актуальность.* При прекращении грудного вскармливания часто отмечается аффективная привязанность к матери. С целью разрешения данной проблемы был разработан метод бережного прекращения лактации. Основу метода составляет предметная деятельность с детьми старше шести месяцев и начало сотворчества матери и ребенка, что способствует «эмоциональной перестройке» матери и оказывает важное влияние в период отлучения ребенка от груди. *Цель.* Разработка методики бережного прекращения лактации, не оказывающей психотравмирующего влияния на диаду «мать–ребенок». *Материалы и методы.* Сотворчество матери и ребенка — методика «младенческого рисования» (не является методикой обучения рисованию). Под наблюдением находилось 47 пар «мать–ребенок», начавших совместное творчество с 6–8 месяцев жизни ребенка, и 30 кормящих матерей, желающих прекратить лактацию, но имеющих психологические трудности в ее прекращении. *Результаты.* Разработана методика прекращения продолжающегося грудного вскармливания, не оказывающая психотравмирующего влияния на диаду «мать–ребенок». Методика предполагает развитие контакта матери и ребенка посредством сотворчества,

помогает снятию стресса у матерей и детей при отлучении от груди. *Выводы.* В данной ситуации сотворчество играет роль отвлекающего фактора, способствующего переходу от общения матери и ребенка в процессе кормления ребенка грудью к общению через творчество, причем чем раньше оно начато (на первом году жизни), тем выше ее эффективность.

**Ключевые слова:** *продолжающееся грудное вскармливание; прекращение лактации; сотворчество матери и ребенка*

The efforts of doctors are aimed to support and prevent breastfeeding during the first 1.5–2 years of life [1]. However, stopping breastfeeding is inevitable. There are different ways to stop lactation. Medicinal cessation of lactation is recommended when the mother lacks milk, but both the mother and the infant are not ready for weaning, and the infant needs psychological help. For this purpose, a method of careful cessation of lactation was developed in consort with psychologists.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method was based on the possibility of objective activity and the beginning of co-creation of mother and child. As a result, an “emotional restructuring” of the woman occurs, which is very important during the weaning period. This technique of “infant drawing” is not a method for teaching drawing. It involves the development of contact through co-creation. This technique was created to relieve stress in the mother-child dyad during weaning.

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY AND DISCUSSION

The situations in which the developed method of stopping prolonged lactation was used are as follows:

- 1) psychological difficulties when stopping lactation;
- 2) repeat pregnancy;
- 3) stopping lactation for medical reasons;
- 4) the mother considers the duration of lactation sufficient.

Weaning was not recommended for:

- 1) acute illness of a child;
- 2) during preventive vaccinations;
- 3) in the summer period;
- 4) when moving a child to another climatic zone.

Before the start of classes, the mother and child consulted a psychologist, but in all cases the breastfeeding mother herself made the final decision on the need to stop lactation. If there was an affective attachment to the mother in a child over one and a half years old, psychological preparation was carried out not only for the mother, but also for the child. The conversation with the child

was conducted in a playful way. Before the beginning of classes, mothers attended a 4-hour seminar, which consisted of theoretical and practical parts. At the seminar, parents get acquainted with the aims and objectives of this methodology and the technology for its implementation. Much attention is paid to safe art materials. The seminar is accompanied by a video and presentation. Parents were given the opportunity to become familiar with infant drawing techniques in practice. After the seminar, parents began attending classes with their children. Frequency of sessions: 2–3 times a week. “Infant drawing” creates a favorable background for stopping prolonged lactation. The main condition is that the process of “infant drawing” arouses interest in the child’s mother.

The developed technique was used to stop prolonged lactation in 30 breastfeeding mothers who wanted to stop lactation, but had psychological difficulties in stopping it. The work was carried out in a group of short-term stays of children with their mothers.

The process of cessation of lactation itself consists of two stages.

1. The preparatory stage, when a mother psychologically prepares for the cessation of lactation. The duration of this period ranged from several days to several months.
2. The stage of actually stopping a baby from attaching to the breast. The duration of this stage is 1–3 days, provided the psychological readiness of the mother-child dyad.

The novelty of this study lies in the fact that we proposed a methodology for joint activity of a mother and child when they participate together in the creative process.

Mother’s role:

1. The mother participates with her emotional support, showing interest in what the child is doing.
2. You should not draw instead of a child. If the mother wants to draw, she can draw on a separate sheet, the child will imitate her.
3. The teaching role of the mother: to introduce the child to a material (paint, paper), to show various “drawing” techniques.

4. The mother communicates with the child in the process of the activity.

5. The presence of the mother creates a sense of freedom and security in the child. This has an even greater impact on the development of their contact and mutual understanding. Co-creation is seen as a way of communication.

The developed method for establishing creative contact between mother and child, starting from the first year of life, was used in a group of mothers whose children were breastfed. This study was conducted in a group of short-term stays of a child of the first or second year of life together with his mother. Along with special classes — music, physical education — conditions were created for joint play and creative activity. A special technique "Creativity from infancy" has been developed, which allows to enter into creative contact. The created environment and the conducted classes made it possible to identify the interest of mothers in joint activities and emotional manifestations in them in relation to the child. From among the children attending pre-school institutions, a group of 91 children was identified who had been breastfed for over a year. The children were divided into two groups depending on the start of classes: the first group consisted of 47 mothers and children who began joint creativity from 6–8 months of the child's life, the second group consisted of 44 mothers and children who began joint creativity with their mothers in the second year of life. The frequency of attendance was 2–3 times a week. At home, parents held classes with children independently. The main criterion for assessing effectiveness is the frequency of occurrence of psychological difficulties on the part of the mother or child during the period of cessation of lactation.

The average period for cessation of lactation was approximately the same in both groups and amounted to  $16,0 \pm 0,7$  months in the first and  $18,1 \pm 0,9$  months in the second group, respectively ( $P > 0,1$ ). Difficulties in stopping lactation occurred in 6 (12,8%) children of the first group and 16 (44%) children of the second group ( $P = 0,01$ ).

## CONCLUSION

In the situation of weaning, co-creativity plays the role of a distracting factor, facilitating the transition from communication between mother and

child in the process of breastfeeding to communication through creativity, and the earlier it starts (in the first year of life), the higher its effectiveness.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Author contribution.** Thereby, all authors made a substantial contribution to the conception of the study, acquisition, analysis, interpretation of data for the work, drafting and revising the article, final approval of the version to be published and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the study.

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