

Book Review

Mother and Child Care. Author: *Utpal Kant Singh, Rajniti Prasad, Ranjeet Kumar and Shivani Suman.* Published by *Jaypee Brothers, New Delhi.* Pages 165. Price Rs. 175.

This is a good addition to the several books published in India on the same subject. Each book has a different angle and this one is aimed at the urban middle and upper social class. While there is tremendous amount of useful information in the book, a few points, which might need modification in a future edition, are highlighted.

Diet in pregnancy recommends meat and fish for lunch without making allowance for vegetarians and suggesting alternatives. There are useful exercises for abdominal and pelvic floor muscles and some general exercises. The ill effects of smoking and drug abuse have been highlighted as well as the use of drugs without a doctor's advice. However, three pages on drugs is unnecessary as hardly anyone would resort to these without a gynecologist's advice. Same applies to several pages of drugs and their effect on lactation. The importance of exclusive breastfeeding is stressed and there is good advice on the often

held belief of not having enough milk and ways to deal with it.

There are simpler ways to give milk formula using the traditional spoon Paldai or an ordinary spoon rather than the bottle (and the expense) of bottle feeding. A six months old baby can happily drink from a cup. Solids are advised from 4-6 months, and yet exclusive breastfeeding is advised for 6 months and weaning (preferable term is complementary feeding) also stresses 6 months. Feeding thrice a day would seem inadequate-4-5 times along with breastfeeding seems better. There is confusion about introducing solid food-at places 4-5 months, at others 6 months.

Some illustrations would have added to the interests. Hepatitis B should be mentioned in the immunization schedule as well as chickenpox vaccine with its pros and cons. When there is no concept of neighborhood schools and schools are miles away riding a bicycle to school does not seem possible. Five pages on vitamins is unnecessary. It is enough to suggest a daily dose of multivitamin syrup. The chapter on emergencies at the end is very useful. On the whole a good addition to the reading material on mother and child care.

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