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For Immediate Release

AAP ADDRESSES SCHEDULED FEEDINGS VS. DEMAND FEEDINGS

CHICAGO-Recent media reports have focused on the issue of whether scheduled feedings or demand feedings are best for babies. In response to these reports, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) reaffirms its stance that the best feeding schedules are ones babies design themselves. Scheduled feedings designed by parents may put babies at risk for poor weight gain and dehydration.

The AAP has always advocated breastfeeding as the optimal form of nutrition for infants, and in December 1997, the AAP issued its latest recommendations about breastfeeding infants. The policy statement says, “Newborns should be nursed whenever they show signs of hunger, such as increased alertness or activity, mouthing, or rooting. Crying is a late indicator of hunger. Newborns should be nursed approximately eight to 12 times every 24 hours until satiety ... In the early weeks after birth, nondemanding babies should be aroused to feed if 4 hours have elapsed since the last nursing.”

Parents should seek medical advice from their pediatricians to ensure the healthy and safe development of their infants, children and adolescents.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 53, 000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well-being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.