

## ANNELERİN ANNE SÜTÜNÜ ARTIRMAYA YÖNELİK ALDIKLARI BESİNLER

Reyhan ERKAYA<sup>1</sup>, Ayla Akkaş GÜRSOY<sup>2</sup>,  
Handan GÜLER<sup>3</sup>

### ÖZET

Annelerin anne sütünü artırmaya yönelik aldıkları besinleri belirlemek amacıyla tanımlayıcı olarak yapılan bu çalışma, Trabzon İl Sağlık Müdürlüğüne bağlı il merkezinde bulunan 15 Aile Sağlığı Merkezinde yapılmıştır. Örneklemi 335 anne olmuştur. Veriler araştırmacı tarafından literatüre göre hazırlanan soru formuyla toplanmıştır. Verilerin toplanabilmesi için Trabzon Valiliğinden resmi izin alınmış, anneler araştırma hakkında bilgilendirilmiş ve yazılı onamları alınmıştır. Veriler araştırmacı ve araştırma hakkında bilgilendirilmiş bir sağlık çalışanı olan anketör tarafından 15 Aile Sağlığı Merkezinde yüz yüze görüşme tekniği kullanılarak doldurulmuştur. Veriler 11.02.2011-22.04.2011 tarihlerinde toplanmıştır. Annelerin %86,3'nün gebeliği planlı, %85,1'i sütlerini artırmak için bir uygulama yapmış, %74,0'ı yeterli ve dengeli beslenmiştir. En çok su (%93,0), sebze-yeşillik (%87,7), çorba (%69,1), komposto (%48,1), meyve (%39,2), rezene çayı (%34,7), Humana Stil Tea (%27,4), sütlü tatlılar (%26,6) ve bulgur pilavının (%24,2) anne sütünü artırdığına inanmaktadırlar. Yapılan istatistiksel analizde annelerin anne sütünü artırmak için herhangi bir uygulama yapma durumu ile aylık gelir, evde yaşanan kişi ve hamileliğinin planlı olması arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu saptanmıştır (p<0,05).

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Anne Sütü, İçecek, Arttırma, Yiyecek

<sup>1</sup>Öğr. Gör.,Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi

<sup>2</sup> Doç. Dr. Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi

<sup>3</sup> Yrd.Doç.Dr. Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi

**İletişim/ Corresponding Author: Reyhan ERKAYA**

**Tel:** 9005362948786 **e-posta:** reyhanozturk30@hotmail.com

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## **FOODS EATEN BY MOTHERS IN ORDER TO ENHANCE BREAST MILK**

### **ABSTRACT**

This study, which was a descriptive study done to determine the foods taken by mothers to enhance breast milk, was conducted in the city center at 15 Family Health Centers of Trabzon Provincial Health Directorate. The sample was composed of 335 mothers.

The data were collected with a questionnaire form designed by the researcher in line with the literature. Prior to data collection, official permission was taken from the Governorship of Trabzon Province; mothers were informed about the study and their written informed consents were taken. The data were collected at the 15 Family Health Centers by the researcher and a pollster who was trained for the study and was a health worker through face to face interviews. The data were gathered between the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2011 and the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2011. 86,3 % of the mothers had planned pregnancies, 85,1% used a practice to increase breast milk, 74,0 % kept a balanced and sufficient diet. They believed that foods which enhanced breast milk most were water (93,0%), vegetables-green plants (87,7 %), soup (69,1 %), compost (48,1 %), fruit (39,2 %), fennel tea (34,7 %), Humana Still Tea (27,4 %), dairy desserts (26,6 %) and bulgur pilaf (rice of wheat grains) (24,2 %). In the statistical analysis, there was a significant correlation between the practice used to increase breast milk, and monthly income, the people with whom mothers shared home and the intended pregnancy ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Key Words:** Breast milk, Drinks, Enhance, Food

## INTRODUCTION

During the postpartum period; mothers should keep a sufficient and balanced diet in order to take energy, protein, mineral and vitamins required by the breast milk secreted for the neonatal and to balance nutritional elements in their own bodies. When the historical progression of the practices used to feed babies is examined, it is seen that the most important food is breast milk (1,2). World Health Organization and The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) recommend that infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life (no any additional food or drink, not even water), should start receiving complementary liquid and solid foods at the end of sixth month and breast feeding should be continued until age of two(3-5).

Across the world, 11 million children under 5 years old die due to various causes each year. According to the reports of WHO; diarrhea, pneumonia, urinary tract infections are the leading causes for baby death in developing countries as well as in Turkey. Most of these diseases can be considerably prevented with breast feeding (2,6).

According to the findings of the Turkish Population and Health Survey in Turkey only one of five babies can be breastfed for the first six months. The rate of feeding only with breast milk during the first two months is 68,9 %, while it is 42,0 % during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> months, 23,6 % during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> months and 1,6 % during the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> months. When feeding babies only with breast milk is not enough, baby formula and other food supplements (water, herbal teas, sugared water, yogurt, milk, cheese, etc.) are increasingly resorted to and breastfeeding is terminated early due to the preference of these foods (7).

It is very important to determine the foods taken by mothers during post-partum period in terms of discovering correct or incorrect methods relating to the study aim. The study results may contribute to the midwives' trainings configurations on postpartum feeding to be provided. Therefore; it is highly important to determine the foods taken by mothers to enhance breast milk.

## **MATERIAL METHODS**

The study was descriptively conducted to determine the foods taken by mothers who had babies aged between 1 and 12 months to enhance breast milk.

### **Research Location**

The study was descriptively conducted at 15 Family Health Centers of Trabzon Provincial Health Directorate.

According to the 2011 statistics of Trabzon Provincial Health Directorate, 15 Family Health Centers of the Directorate served for a population of 279.853 citizens and the number of the mothers who had babies aged between 1 and 12 months was 3715. A total of 69 family physicians and 44 midwives and 23 nurses served for this population. Educational status of the mothers who attended to the Family Health Centers ranged from primary school degree to high school degree and most of them were housewives. As for their economic status, they belonged to middle and upper-middle economic class and were locals of Trabzon Province.

### **The population and the Sample of the Study**

The population of the study was composed of 3715 mothers who had babies aged 1-12 months and who were registered to 15 Family Health Centers (FHCs) located in Trabzon city center of Trabzon Provincial Health Directorate at the end of January 2012. The sample of the study was calculated as 335 according to “sample size calculation for finite population method”. Because there was no exact and accurate information about the foods taken by mothers in order to enhance breast milk; the calculations were performed considering the rate of feeding only on breast milk (%40) during 0-6 months obtained in the Turkish Population and Health Survey . So, when p was taken as 40 %, sample size was determined as 335 within 95 % confidence interval with 5 % error threshold.

### **Inclusion Criteria**

Mothers who met the following inclusion criteria were included in the study:

➤ Being registered to one of the 15 Family Health Centers (FHCs) of Trabzon Provincial Health Directorate.

➤ Having babies aged 1-12 months

➤ Being volunteer to participate

➤ Living with the baby

### **Exclusion criteria**

Mothers who had AIDS, active tuberculosis, substance abuse, breast cancer, psychosis diagnosis and whose babies died after birth and whose babies had poor sucking and swallowing ability were excluded from the study.

### **Collection of the Data**

For the data collection; a survey form composed of 23 questions designed by the researchers was used. The first ten questions of the survey form included socio-demographic characteristics whereas other thirteen questions addressed obstetric characteristics, breastfeeding features and foods taken to enhance breast milk. Written official permissions to undertake this study were gained from the ethics committee, FHC directorates and mothers.

### **Evaluation of the data**

The data obtained from the study were evaluated using SPSS for Windows 17.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences, Lead Technologies, Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). Percentages (%), Chi-Square test, Fisher's Chi-Square test and Yates' corrections were employed.

### **Limitation of the Study**

The sample of the study was consisted of the mothers living in Trabzon city center. Therefore, the results reflected the women included in the study and could not be generalized for all over the country. The data of the study were gathered with a face to face interview technique. Therefore, the reliability of the data was limited to the information given by the interviewees.

## **RESULTS**

In the study; it was seen according to the statements of the mothers that 51,3 % of the mothers belonged to 25-31 age group, 51,6 % had primary school degree, husbands of the 42,7 % of the women had high school degree, 75,5 % of the mothers did not work, 94,9 % of the mothers had social security, 78,5 % lived in city centers, 89,3 % lived together with the husbands and the babies, 58,8 % had an income of 600-1200 TL and 96,7 % did not have any ongoing health problem (Table 1).

In the distribution related to the foods taken by the mothers in order to enhance breast milk; it was seen according to the statements of the mothers that 87,7 % of them consumed "vegetables-green plants", 69,1 % of them "soup" and 39,2% of them "fruit". 99,4 % of the

mothers argued that the foods taken to enhance breast milk increased the amount of the breast milk (Table 2).

**Table 1.** Distribution of Mother's Characteristics

| <b>Demographic Characteristics</b>          | <b>number</b> | <b>%</b>     |
|---|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Age</b>                                  |               |              |
| 18-25 years                                 | 90            | 26.9         |
| 26-30 years                                 | 140           | 41.8         |
| 31 $\geq$ years                             | 105           | 31.3         |
| <b>Educational Status</b>                   |               |              |
| Primary school                              | 173           | 51.6         |
| High school                                 | 114           | 34.0         |
| University                                  | 48            | 14.3         |
| <b>Educational Status of Husband</b>        |               |              |
| Primary school                              | 108           | 32.2         |
| High school                                 | 143           | 42.7         |
| University                                  | 84            | 25.1         |
| <b>Employment Status</b>                    |               |              |
| Unemployed                                  | 253           | 75.5         |
| Employed                                    | 82            | 24.5         |
| <b>Social Security</b>                      |               |              |
| Yes   | 318           | 94.9         |
| No  | 17            | 5.1          |
| <b>Place where mothers lived most</b>       |               |              |
| Cities                                      | 263           | 78.5         |
| Urban areas                                 | 72            | 21.5         |
| <b>Monthly income</b>                       |               |              |
| 600-1200 TL                                 | 197           | 58.8         |
| $\geq$ 1201 TL                              | 138           | 41.2         |
| <b>People with whom mothers shared home</b> |               |              |
| Children and husband                        | 299           | 89.3         |
| Families of husbands                        | 33            | 9.9          |
| Their own families                          | 3             | 0.9          |
| <b>Long lasting health problem</b>          |               |              |
| No  | 324           | 96.7         |
| Yes   | 11            | 3.3          |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>335</b>    | <b>100.0</b> |

**Table 2.** Distribution of the Foods Taken by Mothers to Enhance Breast milk (n:285)\*

| <b>Foods taken by mothers to enhance breast milk</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Vegetable / green plants                             | 250           | 87.7     |
| Soup   | 197           | 69.1     |
| Fruit  | 112           | 39.2     |
| Dairy desserts                                       | 76            | 26.6     |
| Bulgur pilaf   | 69            | 24.2     |
| Halvah   | 65            | 22.8     |
| Fish   | 52            | 18.2     |
| Dairy products                                       | 51            | 17.9     |
| Sesame oil / a thick syrup made by boiling down      | 42            | 14.7     |
| grape juice  | 31            | 10.9     |
| Onion / garlic                                       | 15            | 5.2      |
| Hazel Nut / pistachio / walnut                       | 12            | 4.2      |
| Fig  | 12            | 4.2      |
| Dill   | 11            | 3.9      |
| Egg  | 10            | 3.5      |
| Parsley  |               |          |

\* More than one answers given by mothers. Percentages were calculated with 'n'.

When the distribution related to the drinks taken by the mothers in order to enhance breast milk was examined; it was noted that 93,0 % of the mothers consumed “water”, 48,1 % of them “homemade composts”, 34,7 % of them fennel tea and 93,0 % of the mothers were of the opinion that the drinks taken to enhance breast milk increased the amount of the breast milk (Table 3).

In the distribution related to the practices that mothers said to use in order to increase breast milk; it was discovered that 74,0 % of the mothers who said to use a method (85,1 %) in order to increase breast milk consumed “enough and balanced amount of food from all food groups”, 9,8 % of them consumed “much water” and 9,1 % of them breastfed their babies often (Table 4).

**Table 3.** Distribution of the Drinks Taken by Mothers to Enhance Breast milk (n:285)\*

| <b>Drinks taken by mothers to enhance breast milk</b>        | <b>Number</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Water  | 265           | 93.0     |
| Homemade Compost   | 137           | 48.1     |
| Fennel tea   | 99            | 34.7     |
| Humana still tea   | 78            | 27.4     |
| Dairy drinks (milks, yogurt, drink made of yogurt and water) | 39            | 13.7     |
| Fruit juice  | 34            | 11.9     |
| Rosehip Tea  | 9             | 3.2      |

\* More than one answers given by mothers. Percentages were calculated with 'n'.

The status of using a method to enhance breast milk by the mothers was assessed in terms of socio economic status and obstetric characteristics.

In light of the statistical assessments of the findings; it was found out that there was a significant correlation between monthly income (p:0.018), person with whom mothers lived at home (p:0.020) and having an intended pregnancy(p:0.022), and methods used to increase breast milk whereas no statistically significant correlation existed between age (p:0.498), educational status (p:0.439), the place where mothers lived most (p:0.071) and the number of the pregnancies (p:0.197) (Table 5).

**Table 4.** Distribution of Methods Used by Mothers to Increase Breastmilk.

|  | <b>n</b> | <b>%</b> |
|--|----------|----------|
| <b>Methods used by mothers to increase breast milk (335)*</b>    |          |          |
| Those using a method   | 285      | 85.1     |
| Those not using a method   | 50       | 14.9     |
| <b>Methods / practices used to increase breast milk (n:285)*</b> |          |          |
| Adequate and balanced nutrition                                  | 211      | 74.0     |
| Drinking water a lot   | 28       | 9.8      |
| Frequent breastfeeding   | 26       | 9.1      |
| Resting  | 9        | 3.2      |
| Taking liquid foods  | 8        | 2.8      |
| Warm bath  | 3        | 1.1      |

\* Percentages were calculated with 'n'.



**Table 5 .** Distribution of the Mothers' Using a Method to Increase Breastmilk According to Some Socio-Demographic and Obstetric Characteristics

|  | Using a method to increase breast milk |              |                 |              |                  |
|--|--|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|
|  | Those using                            |              | Those not using |              |                  |
|  | n                                      | %            | n               | %            |                  |
| <b>Socio-demographic characteristics</b>                     |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| <b>Age</b>   |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| 18-25 years  | 11                                     | 22.0         | 79              | 27.7         | $\chi^2$ : 1.394 |
| 26-30 years  | 20                                     | 40.0         | 120             | 42.1         | Sd : 2           |
| ≥31 years  | 19                                     | 38.0         | 86              | 30.2         | p : 0.498        |
| <b>Educational Status</b>                                    |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| Primary school   | 30                                     | 60.0         | 143             | 50.2         | $\chi^2$ : 1.645 |
| High school  | 14                                     | 28.0         | 100             | 35.1         | Sd : 2           |
| University   | 6                                      | 12.0         | 42              | 14.7         | p : 0.439        |
| <b>Place where women lived most</b>                          |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| City   | 35                                     | 70.0         | 228             | 80.0         | $\chi^2$ : 2.521 |
| Rural areas  | 15                                     | 30.0         | 57              | 20.0         | Sd : 1           |
|  |  |              |                 |              | p : 0.112        |
| <b>Monthly Income</b>  |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| 600-1200 TL  | 37                                     | 74.0         | 160             | 56.1         | $\chi^2$ : 5.601 |
| ≥1201 TL   | 13                                     | 26.0         | 125             | 43.9         | Sd : 1           |
|  |  |              |                 |              | p : 0.018        |
| <b>People with whom mothers shared home</b>                  |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| Children and husband   | 39                                     | 78.0         | 260             | 91.2         | $\chi^2$ : 7.780 |
| Families of husbands   | 10                                     | 20.0         | 23              | 8.1          | Sd : 2           |
| Their own families   | 1*                                     | 2.0          | 2*              | 0.7          | p : 0.020        |
| <b>Obstetric Characteristics</b>                             |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| <b>Number of pregnancy</b>                                   |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| 1pregnancy   | 14                                     | 28.0         | 105             | 36.9         | $\chi^2$ : 3.251 |
| 2 pregnancies  | 16                                     | 32.0         | 101             | 35.4         | Sd : 2           |
| More than 3 pregnancies                                      | 20                                     | 40.0         | 79              | 27.7         | p : 0.197        |
| <b>Whether or not it was an intended / planned pregnancy</b> |  |              |                 |              |                  |
| Planned  | 12                                     | 24.0         | 34              | 11.9         | $\chi^2$ : 5.232 |
| Unplanned  | 38                                     | 76.0         | 251             | 88.1         | Sd : 1           |
|  |  |              |                 |              | p : 0.022        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>50</b>                              | <b>100.0</b> | <b>285</b>      | <b>100.0</b> |                  |

\* Yates' correction and Fischer Chi-Square test were performed.

## DISCUSSION

In a study, it was succeeded that the aim of the alimentation of a breastfeeding mother is to balance her own food storage in her body, to meet the necessary energy and nutritional elements required by breast milk supply as well as to answer her own physiological needs (8). Eating much does not increase the amount of the breast milk (9,10). However; breast milk secreted by the mother is the product of the nutrients taken (8).

In our study; most of the mothers told that they largely consumed vegetable and green plants, soup and fruits to increase breast milk. In the study, which was in agreement with ours, reported that 87,3 % of the mothers consumed vegetable and green plants and 75,9 % consumed liquid foods (11). The other study, it was discovered that mothers consumed dried and fresh onion, green vegetables and soup most (12). In a study, it was noted that 71,3 % of the mothers consumed liquid foods, too (13).

In our study, it was seen that 17,9 % of the mothers consumed dairy products to enhance breast milk. As for the mothers in one study; 60,8 % of the mothers consumed dairy products to increase breast milk (11).

64,1 % of the mothers in our study consumed desserts to satisfy daily energy requirements during breastfeeding period. Although even no dessert is needed to be consumed for the energy requirements of the mothers (1); more than half of the mothers in our study consumed desserts.

It was noted that other foods taken by mothers in order to increase breast milk were dairy desserts, bulgur pilav (rice of wheat grains), halvah, fish and sesame oil and pekmez (a thick syrup made by boiling down grape juice);respectively. Mothers consumed desserts by 63,3 % in the study, and by 62,4 % in the other study (11,13). The study detected that mothers mostly consumed desserts, halvah, wheat, rice while in the other study found that mothers mostly consumed rice (17 %) in order to increase breast milk (12,14).The study found eating sesame oil, halvah and wheat, rice as the most used methods that increased breast milk (15).

Nearly all of the mothers in our study told that they consumed water to increase breast milk. 71,1 % of the mothers consumed water in the study; 27,4 % in the other study and 71,3 % in the another study (11,13,14). The most ideal liquid intake is drinking water (10).It should be recommended to consume 3000 ml. of liquid –which means 12 glasses of water, compost and milk and fruit juice in practice- in order to satisfy the liquid need in the metabolism during breastfeeding period (1, 8).

In the study, it was detected that 48.1 % of the mothers consumed compost to increase breast milk. Consumption of compost was a suitable method in one study (8). This study showed that consume compost liquid can be effected for enhance breast milk. But in the literature there are no studies that prove compost as a method to enhance breast milk.

In the study, it was detected that 34,7 % of the mothers consumed fennel tea to increase breast milk. In the study, the rate of fennel tea consumption was 76,9 % (11). The studies pointed out that 30-60 % of the mothers consumed herbal tea to enhance breast milk (16,17). Although it is argued that fennel tea has a small effect upon breast milk production, the effect of herbal tea upon breast milk and baby feeding has not scientifically been proved yet. If fennel tea has an increasing effect upon milk production; it may be a nice alternative for those mothers whose economic status is poor or those who think that their milk is insufficient and look for solutions (5).

One fourth of the mothers of our study told that they consumed Humana Still Tea, which is also herbal tea. In the study; it was detected that 13,8 % of the mothers used Humana Still Tea(11).In the clinical studies on commercial herbal tea mixture (Humana Still Tea); it was found out that the herbal tea mixture increased breast milk compared to placebo or water and linden tea in terms of the amount of breast milk obtained on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> days or in terms of weighing in the first month (5).

It was seen that all of the mothers in our study were of the opinion that the liquids consumed increased the amount of the breast milk. Although there are no studies that prove that feeding and liquid consumption is effective upon the amount of breast milk; it is emphasized that this opinion is important in the sense that it makes mothers feel good (9,10). It was seen that majority of the mothers participating in our study (85,1 %) tried some kind of methods to increase their breast milk; which is in agreement with the findings of the other studies in literature. The study 89,0 % of the mothers, in the study, 77,0 % of the mothers the other study, 80,1 % of the mothers and another study, 89 % of the mothers resorted to a method to increase breast milk (11, 13, 18, 19).

While many studies emphasized the significance that post-partum women should have a sufficient and balanced diet both for babies' health and their own health; it was also highlighted that mothers should have a sufficient and balanced diet to produce enough breast milk (18). If mothers keep a balanced diet, food and hot drinks make them more comfortable (20). Sufficient and balanced nutrition increases mothers' self-confidence for breastfeeding. It

was demonstrated in literature that mothers' self-confidence increased their breast milk (1, 9-11).

74,0 % of the participant women in our study told that they consumed every kind of nutrition group in a sufficient and balanced way in order to increase their breast milk. The study, 73,0 % of the mothers and the other study, 62,7 % of the mothers kept an adequate and balanced diet in order to enhance their breast milk; which indicated that mothers cared breast milk a lot and were open to methods to enhance their breast milk(11, 13).

In literature; it was proved that frequent breastfeeding increased breast milk (1, 9-11). 9,1 % of the participant women in our study told that they frequently breastfed their babies to enhance their breast milk. As for one study all of the women told that they frequently breastfed their babies to enhance their breast milk (11). But; in the other study, the rate of the women who frequently breastfed their babies to enhance their breast milk was 43,0 % (14). The another study argued that 21,1 % of the mothers in Turkey frequently breastfed their babies to enhance their breast milk while 52,0 % of the mothers in Iran frequently breastfed their babies (15). It was determined in the study that only 0,4 % of the mothers thought breastfeeding as "milk-producing" factor (22). The study, suggested that mothers should breastfeed whenever babies needed or whenever they wanted/cried as an evidence of emotional need; which would enable and result in fast and abundant breast milk secretion (23).

Although the rate of the mothers who gained information from health care personnel on how to increase breast milk was high (67,7 %) in our study; it was interesting that mothers gave more precedence to adequate and balanced nutrition instead of frequent breastfeeding and resting. This finding was pleasing in the sense that health care personnel provided training to mothers during post-partum period but it was not enough. The findings indicated that mothers needed training on breastfeeding and the methods that increased breast milk and apart from health care personnel; family elders might play a key role in teaching breastfeeding.

It will be valuable that training on breast milk should be integrated into growth-monitoring of babies, mothers should be trained and supported on breastfeeding and should be provided assistance regarding breastfeeding at primary and secondary health institutions during monitoring of pregnant women, birth and baby monitoring of postpartum period.

## **CONCLUSION**

Majority of the mothers (87,7 %) told that they consumed vegetable and green plants and nearly all of them (99,4 %) stated that this nutrition increased the amount of the breast milk.

Majority of the mothers told that they paid attention to liquid intake and nearly all of them (98 %) stated that they consumed liquid foods –primarily, water, compost (48,1 %) and fennel tea (34,7 %) and that liquid intake increased the amount of the breast milk.

Four of five mothers used a method to increase breast milk. Most of the mothers (74,0 %) told that they had sufficient and balanced diet composed of all kind of food groups to increase the amount of breast milk.

It was seen that information on foods and drinks that could increase breast milk production was mainly provided by health care personnel (67,7 %) (121 midwives, 49 nurses, 23 doctors).

## **RECOMENDATIONS**

Although the rate of the mothers who gained information from health care personnel on how to increase breast milk was high in our study; they performed the necessary practices too little. The content, frequency and clarity of the training provided to the mothers and the methods with which the training was provided should be checked.

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