



# Analysis of breastfeeding in newborns separated from mothers before and after the pandemic of COVID-19

Yong-Chuan Chen, Chia Ling Hsu, Ya-Ting Yang, Ya-Huei Chen, Mei-Yu Chang  
Department of Nursing, Taichung Veterans General Hospital, Taiwan

## ABSTRACT

Breast milk the best nutrition source for newborns. The purpose of this study was to compare the breastfeeding rate in newborns separated from mothers before and after the pandemic of COVID-19. This is a retrospective study. We enrolled the newborns born in NICU or SBR (Sick Baby Room) of Taichung Veteran General Hospital, in central Taiwan between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2021. The rate of Exclusive breastfeeding is 47.38% before the pandemic of COVID-19, and 50.32% after the pandemic of COVID-19.

## CONTACT

<Your Name> Yong-Chuan Chen  
<Organization Name>  
Department of Nursing,  
Taichung Veterans General  
Hospital, Taiwan

Email:

## INTRODUCTION

Breast milk is the most valuable present and the best nutrition source for newborns. After the pandemic of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020, implementing breastfeeding during the Epidemic is an important issue. The theme of World Breastfeeding Week 2021 is protecting breastfeeding and sharing responsibility. How to keep breastfeeding during the epidemic needed everyone's help. In our study, we compare the breastfeeding rate in newborns separated from mothers and analyze associated factors before and after the pandemic of COVID-19.

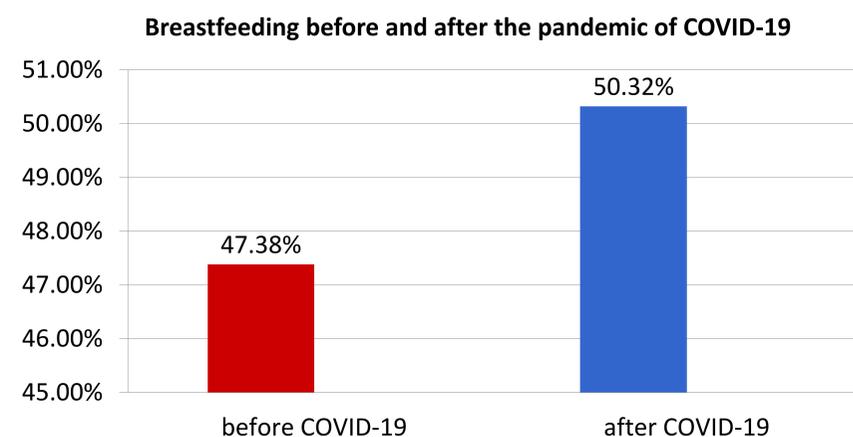
## METHODS AND MATERIALS

This is a retrospective study. We enrolled the newborns born in NICU or SBR (Sick Baby Room) of Taichung Veteran General Hospital, in central Taiwan between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2021, including premature babies. We calculated The total number of breastfeeding babies within 7 days after birth and compared the rate of exclusively breastfeeding cases separated from mothers before and after the pandemic of COVID-19.

## RESULTS

A total of 1731 newborns separated from mothers were enrolled in this study, 859 cases before the epidemic and 872 cases after the epidemic. The gestational age was between 24 and 40 weeks. The demographic data was no difference between the two groups ( $p > .05$ ). The rate of Exclusive breastfeeding is 47.38% before the pandemic of COVID-19, and 50.32% after the pandemic of COVID-19.

## GRAPHS AND TABLES



## DISCUSSION

We found the rate of exclusively breastfeeding cases separated from mothers increased after the pandemic of COVID-19. It might be due to continuous encouragement of breastfeeding by our newborn team. Our attending physicians communicated with parents over the phone about three times a week and encouraged them to bring breast milk to the hospital at a fixed period every day. Feeding with donor human milk was also prescribed clinically. As mentioned above, all measures could increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding.

## CONCLUSIONS

The rate of breastfeeding didn't decrease through the epidemic of COVID-19. We should keep encouraging breastfeeding and benefit more premature babies.

## REFERENCES

Ng, Y. P. Mei., Low, Y. F., Goh, X. L. Fok, D., & Amin, Z. (2020). Breastfeeding in COVID-19: A pragmatic approach. *American Journal of Perinatology*, 37, 1377-1384.