

Breastfeeding Myths End Nursing Early

Lactation consultant Mariam Al Mahdi says misconceptions about milk supply cause many mothers to stop breastfeeding unnecessarily

● **Traditional Bahraini postnatal foods have long been associated with supporting milk production.**

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Many mothers stop breastfeeding not because they have run out of milk, but because they mistakenly believe they have, according to international and regional lactation consultant Mariam Al Mahdi.

Marking the conclusion of World Breastfeeding Week today, Al Mahdi said the misconception that breast milk is insufficient remains the leading reason mothers give up breastfeeding unnecessarily, even though most babies receive exactly the nutrition they need.

She said a crying baby does not always indicate hunger, milk that appears thin is not neces-



sarily lacking in nutrition, and breasts that feel soft have not stopped producing milk. Despite this, these common beliefs continue to persuade many mothers that breastfeeding is failing when it is not.

Al Mahdi said genuine low milk supply does occur but is often linked to identifiable physical or emotional factors rather than an inability to breastfeed.

She identified psychological stress, exhaustion and sleep

deprivation as some of the most common causes. Medical conditions including an underactive thyroid, polycystic ovary syndrome and diabetes may also reduce milk production, along with retained placenta fragments after birth, heavy bleeding during or after delivery, certain medications, epidural use during labour, previous breast surgery affecting the milk ducts and caesarean delivery.

Breastfeeding practices also



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Stress can directly reduce milk production by disrupting the hormones needed for breastfeeding.

MARIAM AL MAHDI, INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL LACTATION CONSULTANT

play a significant role, she said. Introducing formula too early, poor latching, feeding too infrequently and repeatedly using the same feeding position can all reduce milk production over time.

According to Al Mahdi, protecting milk supply starts with

feeding babies whenever they show signs of hunger instead of following a strict schedule, ensuring a proper latch and fully emptying the breast through breastfeeding or pumping. She added that a balanced diet rich in protein, whole grains, vegetables, fruit and healthy fats also supports breastfeeding.

She noted that traditional Bahraini postnatal practices continue to be followed by many mothers. Foods such as hasu, jallab, rashoof and fenugreek have long been associated locally with supporting milk production, while staying hydrated with water, aniseed water and coconut water may also help. She added that postnatal massage, adequate rest and reducing stress wherever possible can further support breastfeeding.

Some foods, including mint, parsley, celery, sage and particularly sour or spicy dishes, are sometimes believed to reduce milk supply. Al Mahdi cautioned

against treating these claims as universal, saying every mother responds differently and should observe how her own body reacts.

She advised mothers to seek assistance from a lactation consultant if breastfeeding becomes painful, the baby struggles to latch, nipples become cracked, milk supply appears too low or too high, engorgement or blocked ducts develop, or when caring for premature babies, babies born with cleft lip or certain medical conditions, returning to work or planning to begin pumping.

“Do not allow myths or discouraging comments to determine your breastfeeding journey,” Al Mahdi said. “With the right knowledge and support, many of the problems that convince mothers to stop breastfeeding can be overcome, allowing both mother and baby to benefit for as long as possible.”

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Residents Raise Housing Concerns

Salman City residents called for better maintenance services and dedicated housing offices during a ministry outreach meeting



Salman City residents raised concerns over maintenance services and called for dedicated housing service offices during a Hayakum outreach session organised by the Northern Municipal Council.

The meeting brought together Housing Ministry officials, MP Jalal Kadhem, councillor

Basem Abu Idrees and Northern Municipality representatives to discuss maintenance, housing regulations and resident concerns.

Residents were briefed on maintenance procedures, safety measures and coordination with Civil Defence. Officials also encouraged residents to submit enquiries and main-

tenance requests through the ministry's WhatsApp service.

Kadhem proposed stronger communication with residents, a joint committee to monitor service issues and wider awareness campaigns. The council said it would continue following up with authorities to improve housing services.

New Lights Replace Al Ramli's Dim Solar Lamps

Residents of Al Ramli housing suburb are finally set to see brighter streets as authorities move ahead with replacing the area's underperforming solar-powered streetlights with a new conventional lighting system.

For nearly five years, residents described the existing lights as being “like candles,” providing limited illumination and leaving some streets in darkness, particularly during cloudy weather when solar panels struggled to generate enough power.

Northern Municipal Council member Abdulla Ashoor said the lighting issue had been among the main concerns raised by residents since he joined the council, alongside other complaints including rainwater accumulation.

He said the problem became more noticeable during winter months, when reduced sunlight and cloudy conditions affected the solar lamps' performance.



The old solar streetlights in Al Ramli barely charged on cloudy winter days, leaving the area in near total darkness at night.



New high quality solar lights

Maintenance challenges and the quality of the previous installation further contributed to the situation.

Following a request submitted by Ashoor, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning began work to replace the solar lighting system with a more powerful conventional network.

According to the latest progress update from the contractor, cable installation has reached 99 per cent completion, while work on replacing lighting poles and

foundations has started across the suburb's main avenues.

Around 20 new poles and foundations have already been installed, and the newly installed lights are now operational. In addition, five substations have been energised to provide power to the lighting control panels.

Ashoor praised the ministry's cooperation and said the project is progressing towards completion, with residents already noticing improved brightness in areas where the new lights have been activated.

Riffa Road Complaints Reviewed

Southern Governorate and Works Ministry inspect Ali bin Khalifa Avenue following residents' complaints



The Southern Governorate's engineering and community monitoring team inspected Ali bin Khalifa Avenue in Riffa with representatives of the Ministry of Works to review residents' complaints.

The visit, attended by Southern Municipal Council member Khalid Shajra, was conducted under the directives of Southern Governor

Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali Al Khalifa to monitor service facilities and improve public services.

Officials reviewed maintenance, infrastructure and service-related observations raised by residents. The governorate said the visits help speed up responses to complaints submitted through its weekly majlis and electronic channels.

Road Dips Leave Homes Flooded

Councillor says poor road repairs cause water to collect outside homes, affecting elderly and disabled residents

Residents in parts of the ninth northern constituency are struggling with pools of water outside their homes caused by sunken road surfaces, according to Northern Municipal Council member Abdulla Mubarak Belal Al Qubaisi.

He said the uneven roads, left after previous water leak repairs, trap wash water from homes and cars, making it difficult for elderly people and those with disabilities to reach their vehicles safely.



Al Qubaisi praised the Ministry of Works for repairing potholes but urged it to fully resurface affected roads instead of carrying out patchwork repairs.

He also called on residents to stop allowing wash water to flow onto streets and urged the Northern Municipality to raise public awareness on protecting road infrastructure.

Hamad Town Mosque Plots Still Await Registration



Residents of Hamad Town's Block 1205 are still waiting for construction to begin on two planned mosques because the plots remained unregistered despite eight years of follow-up.

Northern Municipal Council member Abdulla Mubarak Belal Al Qubaisi said repeated efforts to resolve the issue have failed, even after the matter passed through three successive directors of the Jaafari Waqf Directorate.

The two sites, designated for the Imam Al Mahdi Grand Mosque on Road 536 and the Khatam Al Anbiya Mosque on Road 535, have been the subject of meetings and site visits in-

volving the Jaafari Waqf Directorate, the Urban Planning and Development Authority, the Survey and Land Registration Bureau, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning.

Al Qubaisi said residents have received repeated assurances over the years, but no concrete steps have been taken to complete the registration process.

He and residents have renewed their call for authorities to finalise the registration of the two plots and issue the necessary documents so construction of the mosques can begin, describing the project as an important religious and community need for Block 1205.