Weaning Practices in Other Parts of the World: Case Study Russia

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The objective of the survey was to evaluate infant feeding and weaning practices and anthropometric characteristics of 2- to 24-month-old children in Russia.

A comprehensive analysis was performed of data collected from face to face interviews of a random Russia representative sample of 2,582 mothers of children. We used a specially designed questionnaire that includes sections on health, especially feeding practices, food intake in the previous day and the measurement of height and weight.

The survey was conducted within the framework of ‘Start Healthy Stay Healthy’ Program in Russia, sponsored by Gerber, Nestle Nutrition.

The prevalence of infants breastfed for 2–4 months was 70%, 4–6 months – 60%, 6–9 months – 46%, 9–12 months – 39%.

The most common weaning food was fruit juice (59.4% of children), followed by fruit puree (18%) and cereals (6.4%). 4.4% of respondents used cow’s milk as a first weaning food.

It was found that examined children were slightly taller (z score for height for age was 0.11) and heavier (z score for weight for age was 0.63) than the WHO standards.

To conclude, evaluation of infant/toddler feeding and weaning practices will help to develop guidelines and educational programs to prevent nutrition-related diseases in Russia.