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### **Nutrition support very preterm Infants in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit**

Very preterm infants have higher nutrient requirements than term infants. The foetus multiplies in weight five times from 24 weeks gestation to term (a period less than four months); in comparison term infants double their birth weight by four to five months, Nutrition support preterm infants in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is complex. Optimizing nutrition early in life is essential to improve survival and promote growth and development.

Extrauterine growth restriction is common in very preterm infants. Malnutrition at a vulnerable period of brain development is related to a decreased number of brain cells as well as deficits in behavior, learning, and memory.

Early aggressive nutrition, including parenteral and enteral, is well tolerated in the very preterm infant and is effective in improving growth. A strategy of early parenteral nutrition, followed by combined parenteral and enteral nutrition, then phasing to complete enteral nutrition is currently common practice, Parenteral nutrition is necessary to meet nutritional requirements while enteral feeds are established. The rapid advancement of enteral feeding should contribute to development of necrotizing enterocolitis. Continued provision of appropriate nutrition (fortified or human milk or premature formula) is important throughout the growing care during the hospitalization. After discharge exclusively breastfed infants require additional supplementation.

### **Biography**

Brankica Vasiljevic is Head of Maternity and Child Health Services in NMC Royal Hospital DIP in Dubai, UAE. After completed her MD she had completed her clinical postgraduate education (Pediatric and after that Neonatology fellowship) and academic postgraduate education (MSc in pediatric and ultrasonography field and PhD in neonatology field) at Belgrade University School of Medicine in Serbia. She has completed also Yugoslav School of Ultrasound and different courses in ultrasonography and echocardiography in Serbia and UK, She also finished Post Graduate SQIL Program in Harvard Medical School, Boston USA and Post Graduate Program in Pediatric Nutrition at Boston University School of Medicine USA and Visiting scholar and Internships in Greece (Alexandar Hospital, laso Hospital and Elena Hospital in Athens), USA (Morgan Children's Hospital- Columbia University New York) and Austria (General Hospital of Salzburg and Regional Hospital (LKHLandeskrankenhaus) in Graz). She had won the ESPNIC Educational Grant at 5th World Congress on Pediatric Intensive & Critical Care in Geneva Switzerland (2007). She was a local coordinator for International Neonatal Immunotherapy Study-INIS for Serbia and Montenegro and participated in SIOP 93-01 Study, ITP Study and Twin Birth Study. She has published more than 35 international publications in international indexed journals (more than 100 citations), 5 chapters in various fields of neonatal medicine and have more than 30 presentations in international conferences.

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