

### ☞ *If your baby tests positive:*

- Take him/her immediately to an ART clinic for treatment and follow up
- Continue giving Septrin
- Breastfeed him/her for 2 years of age or as long as possible.
- Breastfeeding will protect the baby from infections
- Without treatment, the chances of survival for the HIV positive babies are reduced.

### ☞ *If your baby tests negative:*

- Provide the baby with appropriate, safe and nutritious foods for optimal growth and development
- Take your baby for monthly growth monitoring to ensure that he or she is growing well
- Return for a final HIV test at 18 months of age to confirm that your baby does not have HIV

## Things to remember

- \* If you are HIV positive, take your child for HIV testing at 6 weeks of birth and at 18 months to confirm his or her HIV status or at 6 weeks after stopping breastfeeding.
- \* Take your child to the health facility every month until the baby is 6 months of age, and once every 3 months until your baby is 18 months of age for growth monitoring and follow up support
- \* Take all those who are sickly and not growing well for HIV testing
- \* Consult a family planning counsellor as soon after child birth for guidance and support
- \* To maintain your health status, practice safe sex by using condoms
- \* Sleep under an Insecticide Treated Net
- \* Give birth in a clean and safe environment under supervision of a trained health worker
- \* Use antiretroviral drugs during pregnancy, childbirth and labour, and breastfeeding period for mother and baby

# How to Care for Your Baby Exposed to HIV



**What you need to know**

## What you need to know

- \* If a woman is HIV positive, her blood and breast milk contain HIV. HIV from a mother can pass to her baby during pregnancy, child birth and breastfeeding.
- \* A baby born to an HIV positive mother should be tested as early as 6 weeks of age
- \* When a child is tested positive; he or she should be taken for care treatment and support at the nearest Health Facility.

## What services are available for your baby?

- o HIV counselling for the mother and her partner
- o HIV testing for the baby
- o Screening for Tuberculosis for the baby
- o Provision of Septrin that protects the baby from infections such as diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria
- o Prevention and treatment of common infections
- o Counselling on safe and appropriate infant feeding.
- o Provision or referral for antiretroviral treatment for the baby who tests positive.
- o Routine Immunizations and monitoring of the baby's growth and development
- o Vitamin supplementation and deworming for the baby

- o Referral for the care treatment and support services for the mother and her baby
- o Provision of ARVs to the baby and mother during breastfeeding

These services are available at health facilities

## How to feed a Baby born to HIV Positive Mother

- \* Exclusive Breastfeeding (giving ONLY breast milk for the first 6 months): reduces the chance of passing HIV to your baby.
- \* Exclusive breastfeeding is the best option for HIV exposed baby for the first 6 months of life unless replacement feeding is acceptable, feasible, affordable, sustainable and safe for them.
- \* Exclusive Replacement Feeding (giving ONLY formula or modified fresh animal milk for the first 6 months): eliminates chances of HIV infection since the baby is not breastfeeding, but there are more chances of your baby dying from diarrhoea, pneumonia and other infections
- \* When replacement feeding is acceptable, feasible, affordable, sustainable and safe", avoidance of breastfeeding by HIV positive women is recommended. This should be under guidance of a trained health worker and the mother should adhere to the chosen feeding option
- \* Mixed Feeding (giving both breast milk and other milks or foods): greatly increases

the chances of passing HIV to your baby.

- \* The chances of your baby suffering from other illnesses and dying are increased if the baby is not receiving breast milk

## How to keep a baby born to an HIV positive mother healthy

- \* Regularly visit the nearest Health Facility for follow up, care and treatment
- \* Give Septrin medication as recommended by the health worker
- \* Practice safe and appropriate feeding options
- \* Ensure that the baby's immunizations are up to date
- \* Routinely monitor your baby's growth and development even after stopping breastfeeding.
- \* Return for a final HIV test at 18 months of age to confirm that your baby does not have HIV
- \* Take your child for the second HIV test 6 weeks after you stop breastfeeding
- \* Look out for signs of diarrhea, fever, cough, mouth sores, ear infections, breathing difficulty, and inability to drink or breastfeed and chills. This is because the baby needs prompt attention and may require treatment immediately