My dear Mrs. Simon:

It is very important to the health of any baby to have the mother plan to nurse it. No artificial food can be prepared that is as well suited to a young baby as its own mother's milk.

It is rare that a mother cannot nurse her baby if she is given the proper care before and after the arrival of the baby. A great many babies really have been killed by well meaning but ignorant old women who, thinking they could improve Nature, told the mother that some artificial food was as good as, if not better than mother's milk. Mother's milk is infinitely superior to any other kind of food, and the majority of women can nurse their babies if they have not been discouraged by interfering friends and if they take good care of themselves.

One great item to be considered in the nursing of the baby is the mother's mental condition. Any woman who has lived on the farm knows that a cow will not give an abundance of milk if it is driven here and there and distributed by barking dogs or other animals. Nursing mothers are affected in much the same way if they are irritated or unhappy. The more calm and peaceful their lives the greater will be their ability to nurse their babies.

The mother who would have good milk for her baby must avoid unnecessary worry, excitement, fatigue or exertion. It is not a good plan for her to go to many public places where she becomes weary or excited.

About this time special attention should be given the nipples. The clothing must be loose and not make undue pressure on the nipples and enlarging breasts. For a few weeks before baby is expected, beginning about the end of the seventh month, the breasts and nipples should be bathed daily with soap and warm water, dried gently, and anointed with some mild ointment, such as abohene, suet, or lanolin. This treatment will tend to place the nipples in good
condition so they will not crack or fissure readily. If the nipples are retracted, they should be drawn out gently and held in this position for about a minute several times a day. However, it will be better to consult your physician with regard to the treatment of short or retracted nipples, especially if for this reason difficulty has been experienced in nursing a previous baby.

It will not be long now until your hopes are realized and I feel certain if you have followed the suggestions given in previous letters you will have a healthy, happy baby, one that will be a great joy to you and your husband.

Very sincerely yours,

F. I. Child Hygiene
U. S. Public Health Service
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