Objective of this study is to investigate the prevalence, duration, practices and barriers of Exclusive breast feeding (EBF) among Jordanian mothers in three major governorates.

Design
Longitudinal, prospective design was used in this study.

Settings and participants
Convenience sample of 572 pairs of postpartum mothers–infants were recruited from postpartum wards at three governmental hospitals and three private hospitals in major Jordanian governorate.
Measurements and findings

Data were collected in two phases. In the first phase, trained research assistants conducted face to face structured interviews with participating mothers at the hospital. In the second phase, the research assistants conducted follow up phone interviews at the end of first, fourth and sixth months after birth. The findings of this study showed that the prevalence of EBF as recommended by WHO was 1%. The average duration of EBF was one month. The main barriers of EBF were: infants feel hungry after breastfeeding, short period between pregnancies, and breast problems.

Key conclusions

Postpartum mothers initiated EBF practice within the first hour after giving birth; however, this practice declined gradually as the infant grew up within the first six months after birth. Implications for practice: antenatal education sessions in the Jordanian governmental hospitals about EBF are required to meet the WHO recommendations. Furthermore, midwives and nurses have to focus on effective breastfeeding process to overcome the barriers of EBF during antenatal education and postnatal care.

Keywords:
Breast feeding, Exclusive breast feeding, Breast milk, Feeding