



# Bottle Feeding Basics

Your baby needs to be fed, be close to you, and feel safe. You do all this every time you give your baby a bottle.

## Feeding your baby

A newborn needs 2 to 3 ounces of formula about every 1½ to 3 hours (if baby is hungry sooner, go ahead and feed him). As baby grows, give more formula in each bottle. An older baby may drink 6 to 8 ounces every 4 to 6 hours. Babies want to eat more when they are growing faster. **Let your baby decide when to have a bottle, and how much to drink.**

### When baby wants a bottle he will:

- ✓ put his hands in his mouth.
- ✓ open and close his mouth.
- ✓ move his head looking for the bottle.
- ✓ fuss and make unhappy faces.
- ✓ cry (this is when he's really hungry!)

### When baby is full he may:

- ✓ turn his head away from the bottle.
- ✓ close his mouth.
- ✓ fall asleep.
- ✓ look around the room.



**Premature babies** may eat on a different schedule. Follow the feeding recommendations from your baby's doctor.

## Hold your baby close



**Show baby he's special.** Hold him, look into his eyes, talk to him. This helps him be calm and enjoy eating.

**Don't prop the bottle.** Baby will miss having time with you. Propped bottles can also cause choking and ear infections.

## Trust your baby and she will feel safe.

- ☺ It's best to let baby decide when to eat and when to stop. Trust your baby to know what she needs.
- ☺ When your baby is older, she will actually cry less. She learns that it's OK to wait. She knows you'll always come.
- ☺ You can't spoil baby by taking care of what she needs.



## Safe Bottle Feeding

- **Put baby to bed with love and comfort, not a bottle.** Start teaching good bedtime habits now.
- **Wash your hands** before making and feeding bottles.
- **Mix formula according to the directions on the can.** Keep mixed formula cold until ready to use.
- **Warm up bottles in warm water**, not in a microwave. Shake bottles before feeding, and test the temperature.
- **Throw away anything left in the bottle after feeding.**
- **Wash bottles and nipples in clean, hot, soapy water, or in the dishwasher.** If you don't have a dishwasher and your baby is less than 3 months old, you should sterilize bottles and nipples by boiling in a pan of water for 5 minutes.
- **Put only formula and breastmilk in bottles.**
- **A bottle is for feeding – don't use it as a pacifier.**



## Your baby is not ready for:

- ✗ Cereal or other baby foods
- ✗ Honey or corn syrup
- ✗ Juice
- ✗ Fresh milk
- ✗ Extra water