



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