

Bottles and Other Feeding Devices

- If a newborn loses too much weight or won't latch, you will need to choose a feeding device to give supplemental milk.
- If all goes well, though, just breastfeed away, but introduce a bottle by 3-4 weeks.

FINGER FEEDING

- If supplementation is necessary in the hospital, **do not use a bottle.**



- The amount of colostrum will be small, so **finger feeding** with a small syringe works well and avoids concerns about nipple confusion or bottle nipple preference.



- A larger 1oz (30mL) syringe with a tube attached can also be considered.

SUPPLEMENTAL NURSING SYSTEM

- If desired, a **supplemental nursing system** can be used as pictured, or by using the same syringe system as in the finger feeding picture.
- Expressed breastmilk, donor milk or formula is placed in the bottle around mom's neck and drains to baby's mouth via a tube taped at the nipple. A clasp controls the flow of milk.



BOTTLE FEEDING

- People are often overly concerned that giving a bottle will cause the baby to prefer the bottle over the breast.
- Be reassured that most babies transition between breast and bottle fine if proper bottle nipples are used.
- Decisions must be individualized, however, and feeding methods can change over time and according to circumstances.
- Two things to consider are
 - 1) the shape of the nipple
 - 2) how fast the milk flows, ie size of the hole.
- Be aware that the advertised flow rates of nipples are not standardized, so a slow flow nipple of brand X can flow much faster than a slow flow nipple of brand Y. Trial and error is required.
- For term babies, a slow flow nipple is usually recommended so that bottle feedings are not easier than nursing.
- For premis with less stamina, a faster flow nipple may be necessary to avoid feeding fatigue so baby can more easily consume enough to gain weight. They should be able to consume about 1 ounce in about 5-10 minutes.
- When the "triple feeding" regimen is required (nurse – supplement – pump) for more than a couple days, there are reasons to consider switching to the bottle for the supplementing step:
 - Bottle feedings are less cumbersome for parents to accomplish when they are exhausted and ready to "hit the wall!"
 - Some sleepy or premi babies don't gain well until they are allowed to regulate the flow of milk themselves by using a bottle. Syringe and finger feedings require you to anticipate baby's suck-swallow pattern.
- If not needed before this, **you must introduce a bottle at about 3-4 weeks old.**
 - If you don't, some babies will refuse bottles forever.
 - Some need daily reminders, whereas others are OK to practice bottles only about once per week.
 - Don't make the mistake of waiting until a couple days before returning to work to try the bottle, only to panic because it will be difficult for the daycare provider to feed baby!

WHICH BOTTLE NIPPLE WORKS BEST?

- It is the opinion of this author that a nipple with a narrow base works best for breastfed babies.
- Examples: **Ventaire, Evenflo, Dr. Brown, Medela, Parent's Choice**



- Insert the nipple far into baby's mouth so lips touch the cap.
- This opens the mouth wide on the bottle nipple just as the mouth should be wide while latched on the breast.

