

How to bottle feed

Before you leave hospital your midwife/nurse will offer to show you how to bottle feed.

You will be offered an opportunity to practice this with your nurse/midwife present.

Specific advice may be required if your baby is premature, sick or has special needs.

Equipment

- A baby feeding bottle and soft slow flow teat
- In hospital, a new disposable bottle and teat is supplied for each feed

How to give your baby a bottle

- Position your baby as close to you as possible. Baby needs to:
 - be upright or semi-upright on your lap
 - have head, neck and body in a straight line
 - be cradled in your preferred arm
 - be positioned so that you can look at each other
- Brush the teat down over baby's lips to encourage an open mouth
- Allow teat to be drawn well into baby's mouth
- Tip bottle up just enough so no air in the end of the teat
- Keep bottle as horizontal as possible to allow baby to "pace" the feed
- Tip bottle down or remove it from baby's mouth if baby is drinking too fast or breath-holding. If this happens, your baby may need a teat with a slower flow
- Slightly lean baby's body back when the bottle is close to empty to keep air out of the teat
- Give breaks during feed if baby seems restless/uncomfortable; offer bottle again when baby is ready
- Bottle feeds usually take around 20 to 30 minutes
- Talk to your doctor/midwife/child health nurse if your baby is:
 - always taking a long time to feed
 - coughing, gagging, or fussing during bottle feeds
 - Seek immediate medical advice if baby has colour changes during a feed (i.e. goes blue or is very pale) and stops breathing
- In hospital, write on your baby's feed chart:
 - date, time and type of milk (i.e. expressed breast milk or infant formula brand)

IMPORTANT!

Always hold your baby whilst feeding with a bottle.

Babies need to be held, cuddled and spoken to during the feed.

For more information

- Queensland Health booklet "Child Health Information Your guide to the first 12 months"
- Queensland Health Breastfeeding website: <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding/>



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Consumers and/or carers provided feedback on this publication.