



## Feeding Your Baby

If there is one topic that most new born's parent frets about, it is feeding. But don't worry. If there is one thing you can take comfort in, know that most babies come with a built-in alarm system – called crying. Soon you will recognize the difference in crying between a wet diaper or food or sleep or just a need to be carried around.

- **Feed your baby Per-Demand:** Feeding schedules are not necessary, for either breast-fed or bottle-fed babies. Generally, your baby should be fed on-Demand – when the baby is hungry. The demand schedule recognizes the infant's own rhythms and allows him/her to eat whenever he chooses and the amount he chooses. Ultimately babies put themselves on a regular schedule. The demand schedule produces happier, more secure infants and more relaxed parents.
- **Be Relaxed:** Food should not be a stressful event for you or the baby. The baby can sense your edginess and respond correspondingly. Choose a comfortable chair and keep the baby warm and dry. Bottle fed babies will take 2-5 ounces every 2-4 hours. We generally recommend waking infants every 2-3 hours during the day but allow the baby to sleep as long as he/she wishes at night.
- **We recommend Breast feeding:** Breast milk is an ideal food for infants. Not only does it have nutrients needed according to the age of the baby, it is also filled with immunity components that protects your child from infections. There are many psychological rewards for both mother and child through nursing, such as intimacy and warmth. Know that breast milk may not come in fully for the first 4 to 5 days. A well-rested mother with a well-balanced diet, with strong emphasis on good nutrition and all the proper vitamins and minerals and an adequate fluid intake will produce adequate milk, as well as maintain her own good health. A note of caution; inform the doctor of any drugs or medications you may be taking, as these may pass through your breast milk to your baby.
- **Maintain Hygiene:** If you do breast feed your baby, wash your hands and breasts before feeding.

## Breast Feeding 101:

- Attend a breastfeeding class.
- Sit comfortably. Guide the nipple into the baby's mouth. Take care to keep the breast from pressing against the baby's nose to interfere with his/her breathing. Gently stroke the infant's cheek nearest your breast: he/she will then turn his head to search for the nipple.
- It will take time for your nipples need to get used to your baby. Breast-feeding can be uncomfortable in the beginning, but it soon eases. Lanolin ointment can soothe sore nipples and is available in the hospital and the drug store. Any severe pain should be discussed with a medical professional.
- Your baby may nurse from both breasts at each feeding. Make sure each breast is emptied before moving baby to the other; 10-15 minutes at each breast is usually long enough. However, if preferred and if your milk supply is good, only one breast need be used. You should alternate the breast on which you start. If your baby is very active in his nursing, allow him to feed at only one breast and give the other breast a rest period. Your

baby will nurse every 2-4 hours. Your baby will take most of your milk in the first few minutes of each nursing. Therefore, the baby should not be permitted to nurse longer than 20-30 minutes at any one time (10-15 minutes/breast). In the first few weeks, while you and your baby are learning, let him/her have a little more time if she needs it. For your comfort and relief, a feeding of the formula that we prescribe may be substituted occasionally for a breast-feeding. Your baby does not need extra water for proper nutrition or satiety.

- Nurse your baby. Sing or talk to him/her during feeding.
- Breast fed babies like to eat often and should be fed when the first signs of hunger are noticed, such as crying, rooting, or vigorous sucking on the hands. This may be every 1.5 hours to every 3 hours. A newborn need to be nursed at least every 3 hours. Your milk may not come in for 2-4 days, but your baby will be getting nourishment through your colostrum. Two or three wet diapers a day, until your milk comes in, is a good sign that he/she is getting enough to eat.
- A breast pump should not be used in the first few weeks unless ordered by the pediatrician.
- Pacifiers should be used minimally until breast-feeding is successfully achieved.
- Bottles of sugar water or formula should not be given to a breast-fed baby unless ordered by the pediatrician. Bottles can hinder successful breastfeeding. However, occasionally they are needed, if ordered by the physician for medical reasons. They may also be used occasionally, if the mother needs a few hours break and some sleep.
- Family support of breastfeeding is very important to successful breastfeeding. Dads, grandparents, and other family members are asked to support and encourage the nursing mother.
- Breast milk is supply and demand: the more the infant nurses (demand) the more milk your body will make (supply).
- We encourage you to continue your prenatal vitamins as long as you are nursing.
- Besides health care professionals, other breastfeeding moms are a wonderful source of help, advice, and encouragement.
- How long you choose to breast-feed is up to you. Most infants will self-wean around 1 year when table foods are introduced. When you choose to wean, it is usually easiest on mom and baby to do so gradually.

## **Bottle Feeding**

- We recommend breast feeding but if you choose not to, today's infant formulas are excellent and complete foods for the first 6 months of life.
- Sit comfortably, hold the bottle so that the neck of the bottle and the nipple are always filled with formula. This helps your baby get formula instead of sucking and swallowing air. Air in his stomach may give a false sense of being full and may also make the baby uncomfortable. Your baby has a strong, natural desire to suck. For hi/herm sucking is part of the pleasure of feeding time. Babies will keep sucking on nipples even after they have collapsed. So, take the nipple out of the baby's mouth occasionally to keep the nipple from collapsing. This makes it easier for him to suck and lets him/her rest a bit.
- Never prop the bottle and leave baby to feed herself. The bottle can easily slip into the wrong position. Never use a bottle as a night or naptime pacifier. The milk is converted by the baby's saliva into a weak acid that can damage tooth enamel. Please do not put the baby into the crib with a bottle. Your baby does not routinely need extra water, if formula fed. Your baby should be off the bottle totally by age 12-13 months. We have seen children with severe cavities involving the top 4 teeth, necessitating dental work and even capping, who were on the bottle past 12-15 months.
- Formula Preparation: Do not make the formula stronger than prescribed. Usually a 24-hour supply of formula can be prepared at one time, but an extra bottle or two may be added to use up a can of formula. If refrigeration is good, any amount up to a 48-hour supply can be prepared safely or an open can of liquid formula can be safely stored in the refrigerator.

## **Preparation**

- Do not microwave your formula or breastmilk to avoid pockets of hot milk. Always test the warmth on the back of your hand before serving your baby.
- All utensils used in preparing formula must be clean. Scrub bottles, nipples and caps with hot, soapy water and a bottle brush, squeezing water through holes in nipples. A detergent removes scum better than soap. Rinse well with hot water. Protect bottles by putting them upside down on a rack or clean towel. Put nipples and caps in a clean jar. Saucepan, measuring pitcher, can opener and other articles used should be washed and rinsed, and kept protected until time to use them. Automatic dishwashers are fine for bottles as well. Boiling bottles and nipples are unnecessary.
- Test Nipples Regularly: Nipple holes should be the right size to help your baby suck easily. When nipple holes are the right size, milk should drip as rapidly as possible without forming a stream. If nipple holes are too small, baby may tire of sucking before he gets all the formula he needs. If holes are too large, he gets too much formula too fast and may not get enough sucking to satisfy. He may also choke or gag. If nipple holes are too large, the nipple is worn out and should be thrown away. Enlarge too-small holes by pushing a red-hot needle through them.

## Burping

- Burping your baby helps remove swallowed air. Burp or bubble him by holding him upright over your shoulder and patting his/her back gently. Or place her face down over your lap and gently rub her back. (s)He can be burped by holding him in a sitting position (baby leaning slightly forward) on your lap, with your hand supporting his stomach. Gentle bouncing may help in this position. Breast-fed infants usually don't burp as much as bottle-fed infants.

## Water

- Your baby does not need water for proper nutrition. However, a few sips of water may alleviate hiccups and 4 ounces on a daily basis may help constipation. Do NOT use honey.

## Spitting Up

- Many normal babies spit up frequently. This is because babies have a weak 'valve' between their stomach and esophagus (the tube leading to the mouth). This valve tends to tighten after the first year of life. Spitting up is normal unless your child has repeated 'projectile' vomiting (extremely forceful), or if your baby is failing to gain weight. Spitting up is decreased by sitting the baby upright for 30 minutes after feedings and by thickening formula with rice cereal (1 tablespoon per 4 oz. formula). Call us if symptoms persist or worsen.

## Baby Foods

- There is no set time when a baby will need to begin with foods. In general, the later the better. Solid foods are not necessary until age 4-6 months. Most breast-fed babies are completely satisfied with only the breast until 6 months. In general bottle babies will want foods somewhat earlier.
- At approximately age 4 months you may start rice cereal, either with flakes mixed with formula or breast milk, or a ready to feed (usually with applesauce or banana added). Start with 1-2 tablespoon(s) per feeding and increase as your baby's appetite increases. There is no correct amount. After you have fed your baby rice cereal successfully, you may do the other cereals (barley, mixed) - and then start vegetables and or fruits. Add a new food every two days. Feel free to stop any foods your baby doesn't like or seem to have a reaction to after eating. Most people add meats last after 9 months.
- Your baby should gradually increase to three feedings per day by age 6-9 months. You may see some decrease in formula intake, and this is fine as long as the formula volume taken is over 26 oz. at 4 months, 22 oz. at 6 months and 16 oz. at 9 months per 24-hour period. Breast-fed babies may slightly decrease their feedings, but don't worry unless it interferes with your milk production in the first 6-7 months. After that, your baby may normally breast feed less. You may start 2nd foods after your baby has taken all the first foods. Second and 3rd foods are generally mixtures of foods and

- less pureed (more textured) and some babies like the change, others don't. Advance your baby, as he/she is ready.
- Most children are ready for finger foods (toast, bagels, wafer cookie, zwieback toast, etc.) after age 6 months, but we don't recommend small finger foods until age 9 -12 months. Most children start some table foods age 9 - 12 months and switch totally by age 12 -15 months.
- Your baby may start water in the cup at age 6 months. We recommend use of a training cup. Limit your child's juice intake.