

Nurses play a significant role in the breastfeeding decision and must make themselves available to families for guidance and support. Several excellent books and organizations, such as La Leche League International,* are available as resources for professionals and breastfeeding mothers.

Nursing Alert

Do not use microwaves to defrost or warm human milk. High-temperature microwaving (72° to 98° C [162° to 208° F]) significantly destroys the antiinfective factors and vitamin C and may cause hot spots that could burn the baby's mouth ([American Dietetic Association, Pediatric Nutrition Practice Group, 2011](#)). Human milk may be thawed or warmed in warm tap water (be sure the milk is not contaminated by the water bath), or by placing in a commercial bottle warmer. Test the temperature of the milk before feeding.

Bottle Feeding

Bottle feeding generally refers to the use of bottles for feeding commercial or evaporated milk formula rather than using the breast, although human milk may be expressed and fed with a bottle. Bottle feeding is an acceptable method of feeding. Nurses should not assume that new parents automatically know how to bottle feed their infants. One study noted 77% of formula-feeding mothers did not receive instruction on formula preparation from a health professional; consequently, hands, bottles, and nipples were not washed properly, and storage and heating practices were unsafe in many instances ([Labiner-Wolfe, Fein, and Shealy, 2008](#)). Parents who choose bottle feeding also need support and assistance in meeting their infants' needs.

Providing newborns with nutrition is only one aspect of feeding. Holding them close to the body while rocking or cuddling them helps to ensure the emotional component of feeding. Similar to breastfed infants, bottle-fed infants need to be held on alternate sides of the lap to expose them to different stimuli. The feeding should not be hurried. Even though they may suck vigorously for the first 5 minutes and seem to be satisfied, they should be allowed to continue sucking. Infants need at least 2 hours of sucking a day.