

([Nelson, 2012](#)). However, the [American Academy of Pediatrics' Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome \(2011\)](#) cites strong evidence for a protective effect in SIDS reduction when pacifiers are used at bedtime and nap time. The exact mechanism involved in the protection for SIDS is not known. Still, pacifiers should be cleaned and replaced regularly, and there should be an emphasis on allowing the infant to control the pace, frequency, and termination of feeding rather than allowing the pacifier (or anything else) to become the focus of the interaction. Pacifier use during painful procedures in neonates has been shown to produce an analgesic effect (see [Chapter 5](#)).

A systematic review found an association between pacifier use in infancy and a reduction in breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding ([Nelson, 2012](#)). However, the authors concluded that pacifier use and poor breastfeeding outcomes may not have a causal effect; rather, it may be related to a marker for socioeconomic, demographic, psychosocial, and cultural factors that determine pacifier use and breastfeeding. A recent Cochrane review found that pacifier use in full-term healthy infants started from birth or after lactation did not significantly affect the prevalence of duration of exclusive and partial breastfeeding up to 4 months old ([Jaafar, Jahanafar, Angolkar, et al, 2011](#)). At the time of this writing, there is no evidence that pacifier use and nonnutritive sucking in *preterm infants* has any effect on the initiation and length of breastfeeding. Nonnutritive sucking should not be withheld from preterm infants, especially when used in conjunction with concentrated sucrose for pain management.

To decrease dependence on nonnutritive sucking in young infants, sucking pleasure can be increased by prolonging feeding time. Also, the parent's excessive use of the pacifier to calm the child should be explored. It is not unusual for parents to place a pacifier in the infant's mouth as soon as crying begins, thus reinforcing a pattern of distress–relief.

If the child uses a pacifier, stress safety considerations in purchasing one. During infancy and early childhood, there is no need to restrain nonnutritive sucking of the fingers. Malocclusion may occur if thumb sucking persists past approximately 4 years old or when the permanent teeth erupt. Some parents may perceive pacifiers as less damaging because they are discarded by 2 to 3