

breastfeeding session at a time. The nighttime feeding is usually the last feeding to be discontinued. It is advisable to never allow a child to take a bottle of milk to bed; this is a major cause of caries in deciduous teeth. If breastfeeding is terminated before 5 or 6 months old, weaning should be to a bottle (not in bed) to provide for the infant's continued sucking needs. If discontinued later, weaning can be directly to a cup, especially by 12 to 14 months old. Any sweet liquid, such as fruit juice, should be given in a cup and should not be given at bedtime.

## Sleep and Activity

Sleep patterns vary among infants, with active infants typically sleeping less than placid children. The total daily sleep for 2-month-old infants is approximately 15 hours (range 10 to 20 hours); whereas the total daily sleep for 6- to 12-month-old infants is approximately 13 hours (range 9 to 17 hours) ([Galland, Taylor, Elder, et al, 2012](#)). Consolidation of nocturnal sleep hours occurred during the first 12 months with decreasing daytime sleep and increasing nighttime sleep. Generally, by 12 months old, most infants have developed a nocturnal pattern of sleep that lasts at least 8 hours. The number of naps per day varies, but infants typically take two naps by the end of the first year. Breastfed infants usually sleep for shorter periods, especially during the night, compared with bottle-fed infants ([Middlemiss, Yaure, and Huey, 2015](#)). A discussion of sleep problems is found in [Chapter 10](#).

Most infants are naturally active and need no encouragement to be mobile. Problems can arise when devices such as play yards, strollers, commercial swings, and mobile walkers are used excessively. These items restrict movement and prevent infants from exploring and developing gross motor skills. Contrary to popular belief, mobile walkers do not enhance coordination and are dangerous if tipped over or placed near the top of stairs, porches, in-ground pools, furnaces, and other hazardous surfaces.

## Dental Health

Good dental hygiene begins with appropriate maternal dental health before and during the pregnancy and counseling during