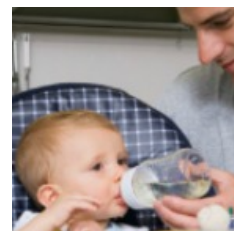




Practical Bottle Feeding Tips

- Bottle feeding (</English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/pages/Bottle-Feeding.aspx>) can be a warm, loving experience—cuddle your baby closely, gaze into her eyes, and coo and talk to her. Never prop the bottle and let your baby feed alone; not only will you miss the opportunity to bond with her while she feeds, but there's also a danger that she'll choke or the bottle will slip out of position. Propping the bottle also increases the risk of ear infections. We do not recommend devices to hold a bottle in a baby's mouth—they could be dangerous.
- Although some babies will drink a bottle straight from the refrigerator, most prefer milk warmed to room temperature. You can warm a bottle (</English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Preparing-Sterilizing-and-Storing-Formula.aspx>) by placing it in a bowl of hot water for a few minutes. Sprinkle a few drops on your wrist; it should feel lukewarm. If it's too warm, wait for it to cool a bit and test again.
 - **Note:** *Never* warm a bottle of formula or human milk in the microwave. The bottle itself may feel cool while the liquid inside can be too hot. Microwaving also heats unevenly. Even though a few drops sprinkled on your wrist may feel OK, some of the formula or human milk may be scalding. The composition of human milk may change if it is warmed too much, as well.
- Make sure the nipple hole is the right size. If your baby seems to be gagging or gulping too fast, the nipple hole may be too large. If your baby is sucking hard and seems frustrated, the hole may be too small.
- Try different nipple shapes to see which your baby prefers. There is no correct shape.
- Angle the bottle so your baby isn't sucking in air. Burp your baby (</English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Burping-Hiccups-and-Spitting-Up.aspx>) a couple of times during the course of a feeding.
- Encourage your partner to give your baby a bottle now and then, perhaps one of the late-night feedings. This not only allows you some extra rest, but it also fosters bonding with your baby.
- Don't let your baby fall asleep sucking on a bottle of milk, especially if she is beginning to cut teeth (</English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/Pages/default.aspx>). Milk pooled in your baby's mouth can cause serious tooth decay (</English/ages-stages/baby/teething-tooth-care/pages/Preventing-Tooth-Decay.aspx>), known as nursing-bottle caries. After feeding and before putting your baby to sleep, gently wipe any milk residue from her gums. If she needs to suck herself to sleep, give her a pacifier (</English/ages-stages/baby/crying-colic/Pages/Practical-Pacifier-Principles.aspx>) instead of a bottle.
- Repeated sterilization (</English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Preparing-Sterilizing-and-Storing-Formula.aspx>) may distort nipple openings. Test to make sure milk flow through the nipple is adequate.



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