



# Bottle feeding

Your helpful guide to success

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**Congratulations on making the decision to bottle feed your baby!**

This booklet is designed to answer your questions about bottle feeding and reinforce the educational information you were given during your hospital stay.

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# Tips for success

## Skin-to-skin contact

Spend time each day holding your baby skin-to-skin just like you did after birth. Skin-to-skin time can be especially helpful if your baby is fussy and crying. Studies have found skin-to-skin contact contributes to less severe infection, better temperature regulation, increased weight gain and a decrease in signs of pain for babies. Practicing skin-to-skin has also been found to have positive effects on parental stress, mother–infant bonding and infant development.

## Rooming-in

Rooming-in is encouraged 24 hours/day for all patients. Rooming-in allows for early attachment between babies and parents, helps babies adjust to life outside the womb, helps babies to feel safe and secure, and helps you learn your baby's feeding cues and behaviors. When you share a room with your baby there are more opportunities for nurses to help you learn how to care for your baby and prepare you for going home.

## Feeding cues

Having your baby in the same room with you helps you become familiar with your baby's feeding cues. The following are examples of feeding cues:

1. Eyes moving fast under the eyelids.
2. Brow wrinkling.
3. Body movements.
4. Hand-to-mouth movement.
5. Sucking movements of mouth and tongue.
6. Crying—a very late feeding cue that may make it difficult to calm your baby down for feeding.



## Paced bottle feeding

1. Hold your baby and the bottle during feedings.
2. Hold your baby so that he or she is almost in an upright position.
3. Brush the nipple of the bottle over the baby's lips to encourage him or her to open their mouth. The baby should take the nipple into his or her mouth, with lips flanged out to a 140-degree angle.
4. Hold the bottle so that it is horizontal to the floor (so that it is almost flat on its side). The nipple will barely be full of formula. This position keeps the formula from dripping or pouring into your baby's mouth and allows for the baby to control the feeding.
5. The feeding will likely take 15-30 minutes.

## Feeding tips

- Changing the side you hold your baby while feeding helps your baby develop strong neck muscles.
- Never prop the bottle or put the baby to bed with a bottle.
- Newborns have small stomachs, so be careful not to overfeed as this can cause vomiting and diarrhea.
- Your doctor may recommend different amounts of formula based on your infant's needs.

## Burping

You may need to burp your baby after feeding him or her. Babies swallow air as they suck and cry.

### To burp your baby:

1. Put him/her on your shoulder or his/her abdomen across your lap.
2. Gently pat baby's back.



# Preparing powdered formula

Most people use powdered formula as it is the least expensive. Your baby’s doctor may recommend a specific type of formula for your baby. It is okay to use the store brand versions of name brand formulas. When buying formula check for expiration dates.

## Clean

- Start by washing your hands and the table or counter top you will be using.
- Bottles and nipples should be washed in the dishwasher or with hot soapy water and rinsed well (a bottle brush is very helpful). Then, sterilize bottles by boiling them in water for 10 minutes.
- Do not store the scoop in the can after handling it.

## Mix

Follow the formula directions carefully. Formula made with too much or too little water could cause dehydration, diarrhea or poor growth. Measure the correct amount of water first, then add the powder and mix well by gently shaking. To help save time and reduce waste you can prepare an entire day’s supply of infant formula. Cover and store this in the refrigerator and use within 24 hours.

## Water

Boil Water: All types of water should be boiled before being used to mix formula. The American Academy of Pediatrics and The World Health Organization recommend boiling all types of water.

- Tap water or bottled water can be used.
- For well water, talk to your baby’s doctor to see if yours is safe. Nitrates found in well water can harm infants. Bottled water may be used if you have not had your water tested.
- Use the water to prepare the formula within 30 minutes: Temperature should be no cooler than 158 degrees Fahrenheit.

Powdered formula is not sterile, so by mixing it with the boiled water, the risk of illness is reduced.

## Cooling

Cool the formula before feeding by running bottles under tap water or placing in an ice bath. Check the temperature on your wrist before feeding. It should feel the same as your normal body temperature.

## Warming

Place bottles in a small bowl filled with warm water to gently warm them over 5-10 minutes. Be sure to check the temperature before feeding. Once you begin feeding the baby, the formula must be used within 1 hour or thrown away. Do not heat formula in the microwave as it can result in burns to the baby’s mouth. The temperature should be the same as your normal body temperature.



# Feeding tracker

## Feeding my baby–When should I call for help?

Use this chart to know when your baby is eating enough and having enough wet and dirty diapers.

<b>Green zone:</b> <b>Doing well</b>	<b>Your baby has:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Had 8 to 12 feedings in a 24 hour period.</li><li>• Increases the number of wet diapers in a 24-hour period:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Day 3 of life: at least 3 wet diapers.</li><li>- Day 4 of life: at least 4 wet diapers.</li><li>- Day 5 of life and beyond: at least 5 wet diapers.</li></ul></li><li>• Has at least 3 stool diapers starting on day 3 of life.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep it up. You are doing great.</li></ul>
<b>Yellow zone:</b> <b>Having some difficulty</b>	<b>Your baby has:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Less than eight feedings in a 24-hour period.</li><li>• At least three wet diapers in 24 hours.</li><li>• At least one stool diaper in 24 hours.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't give up. You are not alone.</li><li>• Call your baby’s provider if you have questions.</li></ul>
<b>Red zone:</b> <b>Medical alert!</b> <b>Get help</b>	<b>Your baby has:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fewer than three wet diapers in 24 hours.</li><li>• Not had a stool in 24 hours.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Call your baby’s provider.</li></ul>



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This handout does not take the place of a discussion with your health care team.  
Discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your health care team.

Approved for distribution by System Education Council.