

# Paced Bottle Feeding

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## What is it?

In paced bottle feeding, the caregiver controls or paces the flow of milk to better resemble breastfeeding. It allows your baby to drink at a comfortable rate and helps prevent overfeeding. Expressed breast milk is the first choice for a supplement.

In traditional bottle feeding it may look like your baby is very hungry as she gulps but she may actually be trying to swallow quickly to avoid choking. This can be unsafe for baby.

## How to Pace Feeds

- Hold your baby in an upright position, supporting her head and neck with your hand.
- Feed your baby skin-to-skin if possible.
- Use a wide-based, slow-flow nipple.
- Touch the baby's upper lip with the bottle nipple, just as you would with your nipple to encourage baby to open her mouth wide.
- Gently allow baby to pull the nipple into her mouth. Do not force the nipple into baby's mouth.
- Keep the bottle horizontal so that the nipple is partially full. This will slow the flow of milk. It is not necessary to keep the nipple full of milk as all babies swallow air while feeding.

**Remove the bottle if your baby shows any of these dangerous signs:**

- swallowing quickly without taking a breath after each swallow
- milk spilling from her mouth
- opening eyes widely
- stiffening of arms and legs
- flaring nostrils
- grimacing
- lips turning blue

- Count your baby's sucks and swallows. If your baby does not take a breath by the third to fifth suck, remove the bottle and take a 3-5 second pause to let her breathe. Your baby may suck harder when you try to take the nipple from her mouth, even though she needs a breath.
- Often baby will swallow, then breathe, and then open her mouth. This shows she is ready to begin feeding again.

**Watch for these cues that suggest your baby is satisfied:**

- falling asleep
  - turning head aside
  - no longer sucking
  - letting go of the nipple
  - pursing lips
- Discard any milk your baby does not finish.

**Note:**

- For healthy, full-term babies receiving expressed breast milk, it is not necessary to sterilize the equipment with each use. Wash bottles, nipples and caps in hot soapy water and rinse well with hot water. Let the containers air dry.

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For more information, call Region of Peel—Public Health at 905-799-7700  
Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Caledon residents call free of charge at 905-584-2216  
[BreastfeedingInPeel.ca](http://BreastfeedingInPeel.ca)

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