

# Paced Bottle Feeding

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## What is it?

Paced bottle feeding is a way of providing a supplement to a baby from a bottle with an artificial nipple. This method gives the baby more control over the flow of the feed and the pacing promotes the return to full breastfeeding as early as possible.

## Collect Equipment

- 60 - 100ml sterilized glass or bisphenol A free plastic bottle
- Silicone or latex slow-flow artificial nipple. A longer nipple with a wider base may encourage the baby to open her mouth wider.
- Supplement: expressed breast milk is the first choice but formula may be necessary.

## Set-Up and Use of Equipment

- Warm the bottle of supplement in a warm water bath.
- Hold your baby in a slightly upright position and skin-to-skin if you are able.
- Switch arms half way through the feed to mimic breastfeeding.
- If you are having difficulty observing your baby's cues in this position, hold her upright in front of you, supporting her head and neck with your hand.
- Tickle your baby's lips to encourage a wide mouth. Make sure your baby sucks on the wider base of the nipple, not just the tip.
- Position the bottle at an angle so that the nipple is partially full, this will slow the flow of supplement.
- 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 fifth suck, remove the bottle and take a 3-5 second pause to let her breathe.
- Rest the nipple on your baby's bottom lip and watch for cues that she is ready to feed 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 supplement your baby does not finish.

Note: It is not necessary to keep the nipple full of milk as all babies swallow air while feeding.

In traditional bottle feeding it may look like your baby is very hungry as she gulps but she may be trying to swallow quickly to avoid choking. Your baby may suck harder when you try to take the nipple from her mouth, even though she needs a breath.

## Cleaning of Equipment

- For healthy, full-term babies receiving expressed breast milk, it is unnecessary to sterilize the equipment. Wash bottles, nipples and caps in hot soapy water and rinse well with hot water. Let the containers air dry.
- For babies receiving formula refer to the "Preparing Formula for your Baby" handout.

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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  
[www.BreastfeedingInPeel.ca](http://www.BreastfeedingInPeel.ca)

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