

RESPONSIVE BOTTLE FEEDING

The early days with your baby are a great time to get to know and love each other. This can be done by keeping your baby close to you, enjoying skin contact and feeding according to these tips. Babies will feel more secure if most feeds are given by mum and dad, especially in the early weeks, as this will really help you bond with each other.

1

Feed your baby when they show signs of being hungry: look out for cues (moving head and mouth around, sucking on fingers). Crying is the last sign of wanting to feed, so try and feed your baby before they cry (for more details, see the Start4Life Guide to bottle feeding).

2

Hold baby close in a semi-upright position so you can see their face and reassure them by looking into their eyes and talking to them during the feed. Try and alternate the side you hold baby.

3

Begin by inviting baby to open their mouth: softly rub the teat against their top lip. Gently insert the teat into baby's mouth, keeping the bottle in a horizontal position (just slightly tipped) to prevent milk from flowing too fast.

4

Watch your baby and follow the cues for when they need a break; these signs will be different from one baby to the next, they may splay their fingers and toes, spill milk out of their mouth, stop sucking, turn their head away or push the bottle away. Gently remove the teat or bring the bottle downwards to cut off the flow of milk.

5

Your baby will know how much milk they need. Forcing your baby to finish a feed will be distressing, and can mean your baby is overfed.



WHAT INFANT FORMULA TO CHOOSE

If you are giving your baby infant formula,
FIRST INFANT FORMULA (whey-based)
is the only formula they will need in the first year of life

6

What infant formula should I use?

It doesn't matter which brand you use, they are all very similar.

It doesn't matter if you choose cows' or goats' milk based formula, but talk to your midwife or health visitor before choosing a soya based formula.

7

What about all the other milks that claim to help hungry babies, prevent colic, wind, reflux or allergies?

There is no evidence that most of these "special" milks do any good, and they might not be safe for your baby. Ask your midwife or health visitor if you think your baby might need a different milk.

8

Should I move on to follow-on formula when my baby is six months old?

There is no need for follow-on formula. Stick to a first infant formula throughout the first year.

9

How long do I need to use infant formula for?

When your baby is one year old, they will be getting more of their energy, vitamins and minerals from food, and full fat cows' milk can be their main milk drink. If you have any concerns, or want to know about other milks, ask your health visitor.

10

Want to know more?

A simple, up to date guide on infant milks can be downloaded at firststepsnutrition.org

Unicef UK provides a guide on different types of infant milks, available for download at babyfriendly.org.uk

Breastfeeding is the healthiest way to feed your baby. If you decide not to breastfeed or to stop breastfeeding, it is possible to restart. Giving infant formula to a breastfed baby will reduce your milk supply. You do not need to eat any special foods while breastfeeding, but it is a good idea for you, just like everyone else, to eat a healthy diet.

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