

Bottle Feeding

It is important that babies are bottle fed safely. If the flow of milk is too fast, a baby may feel stressed and may choke. A baby who is bottle feeding safely will be able to suck, swallow and breathe in a relaxed and easy manner.

KEEP YOUR BABY SAFE DURING BOTTLE FEEDINGS BY:

- Holding your baby during feedings
- Sitting your baby almost fully upright
- Holding the bottle parallel to the ground (horizontal) so that the nipple is about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ full of breastmilk or formula
- Tipping the bottle only when there is less fluid remaining or you begin to hear baby sucking on air
- Avoiding fast flowing nipples
- Never forcing a bottle into your baby's mouth



Remember: Always hold your baby when bottle feeding. Do not bottle feed your baby in a car seat or 'prop the bottle' up for the baby

IT CAN BE STRESSFUL FOR A BABY TO HAVE TO KEEP UP WITH A FAST FLOW OF LIQUID. WATCH FOR THESE SIGNS OF STRESS FROM BABY WHEN BOTTLE FEEDING:

- Swallowing quickly without taking a breath after each swallow
- Coughing, gagging or making squeaking noises
- Raising hands toward bottle with open hands or fists
- Breathing fast or working hard to catch breath
- Milk leaking out the side of mouth
- Smacking noises
- Pushing nipple out with tongue
- Squirming, struggling or pulling away from the bottle

IF YOUR BABY IS SHOWING SIGNS OF STRESS WHEN BOTTLE FEEDING:

- Take the nipple out of the mouth for a few seconds. Rest the nipple against baby's upper lip then give the nipple back when baby reaches for the nipple
- Tip the bottle end down to empty the nipple of milk for a moment until baby swallows and is ready to suck again
- Take bottle away, burp and cuddle baby, and offer bottle again when signs of hunger return (see below)

Trust that your baby knows when and how much to eat. Your baby may drink more by bottle at some feeds and less at others. Follow baby's hunger and fullness signs.

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-800-361-5653
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/breastfeeding

SIGNS OF HUNGER INCLUDE:

- Rooting (opening mouth and searching for nipple)
- Restlessness (moving, squirming and fussing)
- Sucking on hands
- Crying – this is a late sign of hunger. The above signs are usually seen first

SIGNS OF FULLNESS INCLUDE:

- Sucking action slows down
- Letting go of the bottle nipple or losing interest
- No longer rooting or looking for nipple once it is removed from mouth
- Turning head away

CLEANING

It is very important to clean bottles well after each use. Guidelines for cleaning depend upon whether expressed breast milk or formula is used.

If feeding expressed breastmilk:

- Wash bottles and nipples after each use in hot soapy water. Rinse well.
- Allow bottle and nipples to air dry upside down on a clean cloth or towel on the counter

If feeding infant formula:

- Wash bottles and nipples after each use in hot soapy water. Rinse well
- Place bottles and nipples in a pot so they are fully covered by water. Boil for two minutes at a rolling boil
- Allow bottle and nipples to dry upside down on a clean cloth or towel on the counter
- You can also use a commercial sanitizer - follow manufacturer's instructions

**For more information about feeding your baby or growing child,
please call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 to speak with a Registered Nurse,
or visit york.ca/feedingkids or york.ca/breastfeeding**