

Making every ounce count: How to give the best when mom is away

Combining Breastfeeding with Bottle-feeding



Congratulations on making the decision to breastfeed. Your milk will help protect your baby from illness and disease. You may worry about how to continue providing breastmilk when away from your infant. This brochure provides tips for combining breastfeeding with bottle-feeding.

Is it okay to breastfeed and bottle-feed?

Yes – but exclusive breastfeeding (feeding your milk only) in the first few weeks is recommended. To be successful at combining breastfeeding and bottle-feeding you must first establish a large breastmilk supply. Exclusive breastfeeding the first few weeks establishes your milk supply and sets it at a high volume. Setting your milk supply at a high volume makes it much easier to maintain. Once you have “set” your milk supply, then you can introduce a bottle if needed.



If returning to work, when should I start pumping and storing my milk?

- Begin pumping about 2-3 weeks before returning to work. Store the milk in the freezer to use at a later time.
- If your baby only nurses on one breast at a time, pump the other breast and save the milk.
- If your baby goes a long period of time between breastfeedings, pump during this time and freeze the milk.
- Only put the amount of breastmilk in the bottle your baby will take in a feeding. Adjust the amount as he grows.
- Put the date and time on the storage container so you know how long it has been stored
- Once you go back to work, pump at home after you nurse in the morning. Ask the child care provider to feed this bottle first without refrigerating the milk. This will give your baby the most protection from the breastmilk.



How do I combine breastfeeding and bottle-feeding?

- Offer the first bottle of breastmilk when your baby is 3-4 weeks old
- Offer the bottle once a day between breastfeedings when your baby is neither full nor hungry. Try offering $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 ounce to help your baby learn to drink from a bottle without feeling too full.
- Make sure the milk is not dripping quickly into your baby's mouth at the beginning of the bottle-feed. Hold the bottle with the nipple pointed down until the dripping stops before offering the bottle. Photo 1.
- Hold the bottle at an angle so the nipple is not full of milk. This slows the amount of milk your baby gets with the first few sucks. Photo 2.
- When you are breastfeeding your milk flows faster at different times. You can create a faster flow with the bottle by tipping it up or a slower flow by lowering the bottle. This creates the same experience your baby has during breastfeeding. Photo 3.
- To make bottle feeding more like breastfeeding hold your baby close and make eye contact.

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



What kind of bottle nipples should I buy?

- It is best to buy a few individual nipples to see which one your baby takes the best.
- Bottle nipples are labeled according to flow, shape, texture and length.

– Flow

Bottle nipples are labeled as slow, medium or fast flow. Newborns may handle a slow rate better, but as they grow, may prefer a faster rate.

– Shape

Find a nipple that has a wider base. This encourages your baby to open his mouth wider, just as he would when breastfeeding. Photo 4.



– Texture

The breast is soft, so choose nipples with softer textures.

– Length

Choose a length that is slightly longer than the normal length of your nipple at rest.

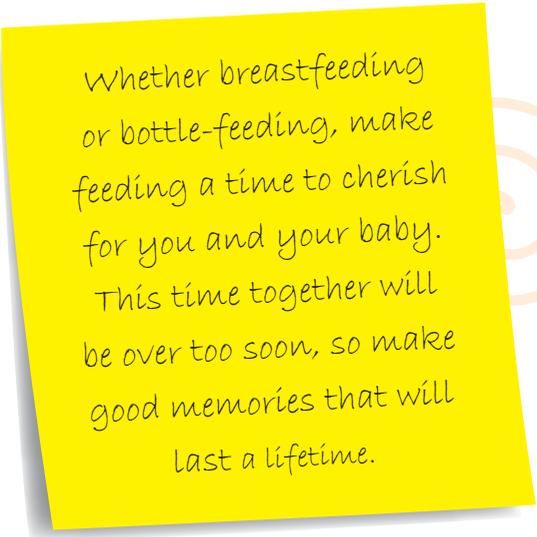
What if my baby refuses the bottle?

- Offer the bottle when your baby is happy and calm not when he is upset.
- If your baby refuses the bottle, comfort him with holding, singing, or his favorite toy. Breastfeed him after he calms down. Try the bottle again later in the day.
- Babies may refuse to feed when they do not feel well. Check your baby for signs of illness.
- Hide the bottle with a blanket or washcloth during the feeding.
- Some babies do better taking the bottle from another person.
- If your baby refuses the bottle from another person, try giving them something to hold that smells like you, such as a scarf or a recently worn shirt.
- If your baby refuses the bottle from another person, try giving the bottle yourself. Your baby already trusts you for feedings and may feel more comfortable taking the bottle from you.
- If your baby will only take the bottle from you, try starting the feeding with the bottle and then hand the baby and bottle off to the person you want to feed the baby.
- Offer the bottle in a different place, such as outside.
- Try different positions such as baby placed with their back to your tummy facing away from you. Photo 5.



What if I do not have enough expressed breastmilk?

- Combining breastfeeding with formula-feeding reduces the protective effect of breastmilk but may be necessary at times. Giving your baby any amount of breastmilk is better than none. Every ounce of breastmilk counts when it comes to your baby's health.
- Occasionally, mothers may not have enough breastmilk to meet their baby's needs. If this happens, give your baby breastmilk first and then give an additional amount of formula if needed.
- Mixing formula and breastmilk in the same bottle will not harm your baby. Follow the mixing directions on the formula label before adding it to expressed breastmilk. When adding formula to breastmilk, swirl the bottle instead of shaking it.
- Only breastmilk or formula should be put in bottles. Never add cereal or offer juice or other sweetened fluids from a bottle.
- Never put any sweeteners on the bottle nipple.



Whether breastfeeding or bottle-feeding, make feeding a time to cherish for you and your baby. This time together will be over too soon, so make good memories that will last a lifetime.



This institution is an equal-opportunity provider.

© 2011 Texas Department of State Health Services.
Nutrition Services Section. All rights reserved.

Stock no. 13-06-13588 8/11

