

Now that you and your baby are ready to wean from the nipple shield, here are some tips to help make this transition easier:

- If you have *flat or inverted nipples*, before attempting to feed at all, pump a few minutes. This will elicit let-down so that baby gets a quick reward. It will also elongate the nipple for him.
- *Breastfeed frequently* – as often as you can. Attempt to feed before he gets too hungry – when he is sucking on his fingers or rooting, but before he cries. If you can catch him early he may be more willing to work with you. You also might try nursing when he is a little drowsy. Some babies are more willing to take the breast when they are semi-asleep than when fully awake.
- It may help if you *compress your breast* and hold it firmly about 1 1/2 inches from the base of your nipple toward the chest wall (usually at the edge of the areola just past where your baby's lips will be) – like squishing down a big thick sandwich on a roll to take a bite. Holding the breast this way makes your nipple more firm like the shield. Keep holding it like that until it feels like baby is sucking well, and then slowly release the grip.
- If baby becomes upset as you are trying, stop and attempt to calm him before trying again.
- If baby doesn't take the breast without the shield relatively easily, give it to him with the shield. *DO NOT* allow him to become frustrated at the breast, that will only make him more resistant to breastfeeding. Allow baby to build trust that nursing will work and will be ok, even if that means using the shield to make it familiar and easy for him. Once he builds trust, start to remove the shield after he has been on for a while.
- After baby is nursing well and let-down has occurred, attempt to remove the shield quickly and re-latch baby. Very gradually, start to remove it earlier and earlier in the feeding until you don't need it at all.
- Sometimes it works to offer the first breast with the shield and the second one without it, if your baby takes both breasts in one feeding.
- In the beginning, you may not want to take away the shield at every feeding so the baby relaxes and doesn't look for you to remove it every time.
- You may hear the recommendation to cut away the tip of the nipple shield, a little each day, until it's gone. *This is **not** recommended* for silicon shields, because it will leave sharp edges.