

Breastfeeding

PROPER USE OF NIPPLE SHIELD

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A nipple shield is a flexible silicone nipple that is worn over the breast while an infant is breastfeeding. They are considered a short term solution for feeding problems and should only be used under the guidance of a board certified lactation consultant.

HOW TO USE A NIPPLE SHIELD

- Turn the shield partially “inside-out” before placing on breast. Then let it unfold, drawing the nipple into the shield.
- To help the shield attach to the breast either dip in warm water or apply drops of breast milk or water to the rim of the nipple shield. Check the product insert for more information.



CLEANING

- Use hot soapy water and rinse with hot water after every use.
- Drain, dry and store in a clean, covered container.

TIPS TO BE SUCCESSFUL

- When using a nipple shield, correct latch is important. Your baby needs to have their mouth open “yawn” wide.
- A trained lactation consultant should evaluate the latch of your baby onto your breast and ensure you are using the shield correctly.
- After each feeding, look for milk in the tip of the shield and check for a decrease in breast fullness as signs that your baby is draining the breast.
- If your breasts do not feel soft after nursing with a nipple shield you may want to use a breast pump or hand express after breastfeeding to ensure the breasts are well drained.
- Nipple shields come in different sizes. Check with a lactation consultant to make sure you are using the correct size.
- If your baby’s weight gain is a concern, weekly weight checks may be recommended.
- The number of dirty and wet diapers is a good indicator that your baby is receiving enough breast milk. Infants should have 4 or more dirty diapers and 6 or more wet diapers daily by 5 days of age.
- It is important to continue to have close follow-up with a lactation consultant while using a nipple shield.

WEANING FROM A NIPPLE SHIELD

- You may want to attempt breastfeeding without the nipple shield once your baby is feeding well.
- After your baby has been nursing well for several minutes with a nipple shield, try removing it to see if the baby will then latch onto your bare breast.
- If after removing the nipple shield, your baby will not latch onto your bare breast, replace the shield and continue using throughout the rest of the feeding.
- If attempting to wean from the nipple shield is making feeding too stressful, do not attempt at every feeding.
- Attempt at times when your baby is more relaxed and you feel less stressed.

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