

Bottle feeding your baby

Congratulations on the birth of your baby!

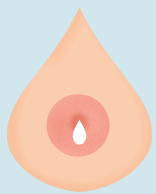
How you feed your baby is one of the choices you will make throughout your parenting journey. As with every choice, we want you to feel fully informed and supported.



Breast / chest milk is the healthiest choice for you and your baby. It is rare to be unable to produce enough milk, but sometimes extra support is needed until your supply is well established.

If you are breast / chest feeding, giving other milk will affect your own milk supply. If you are not breast / chest feeding or expressing milk for your baby, a first infant formula should be used.

Did you know....



The living components of breast / chest milk which provide the additional health benefits to your baby are not able to be replicated in formula milk. The more of your milk you provide for your baby, the greater the protection from illness for you both.

Some families may stop breast / chest feeding if they run into challenges and don't know what to do.

It is possible to restart breast / chest feeding after stopping. Please reach out for more information or support at any time if you have worries about your milk supply or concerns about whether your baby is getting enough milk. We are here to help.



Types of milk

After breast / chest feeding, the birth parent's own expressed milk is the next healthiest alternative. Proving **any** of your own milk is beneficial for you and your baby, and we want to support you to give as much of your milk as you can or choose.

If you are experiencing challenges in the first 28 days, the hospital's Specialist Infant Feeding Team offer a free breast pump loan scheme, to help support you starting off on your journey. Speak to your midwife or health visitor for more information.



We believe all families deserve accurate evidence-based information about their feeding choices, with access to the best care and support, free of judgement.

For accurate and up-to-date information about types of milk and safe bottle feeding, see the **First Steps Nutrition Trust** website

<https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/>



If you are using formula...

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A **first infant formula** should always be used for your baby's first year. It does not matter which brand you use as they are all very similar. Because they are so similar, it is safe to change brands at any time.

Your baby should stay on the **first milk for the first year** of life. There is no need or benefit to using different stages or types of milk such as hungrier baby, follow-on, or comfort milks. At one year of age your baby can move on from formula milk to pasteurised whole cow's milk.

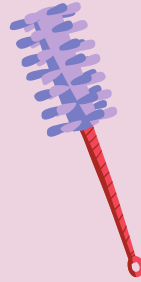


Formula milk contains added Vitamin D but all babies drinking less than 500mL a day need a Vitamin D supplement

Cleaning and sterilising your equipment

It is important to properly clean and sterilise feeding equipment to prevent your baby from getting infections or stomach upsets.

Before sterilising, clean the bottle and teat in hot, soapy water using a clean bottle brush. After cleaning, rinse in cold running water before sterilising.



If you have a dishwasher, it can be used to clean your equipment but you will still need to sterilise it - dishwashers do not get hot enough to sterilise!

Sterilising

After cleaning, your equipment needs to be sterilised using either...

- cold-water sterilising solution
- steam
- boiling

If you are using a cold-water solution or steam steriliser, follow the manufacturer's instructions. If you are sterilising with steam or boiling, be careful to avoid scalds or burns.

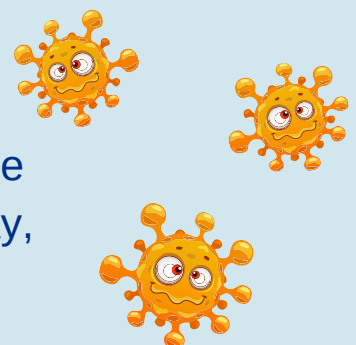
For more detailed information, see the Guide to Bottle Feeding on the postnatal leaflets webpage.



<https://www.ulh.nhs.uk/services/maternity-services/postnatal-leaflets/>



It is best to remove the bottles from the steriliser just before they are used. If you are not using the bottles straight away, connect the teat and put on the lid to protect the sterilised bottle and teat from contamination.



Bottle feeding your baby

Babies do not feed on a schedule - feed your baby when they show signs of hunger. They may not always want to finish the full amount of milk they have been offered - this is okay. Just offer milk whenever they next show feeding cues. This is called responsive feeding and helps your baby to regulate their own appetite.



It is important not to overfeed your baby. This can make your baby more likely to have a sore tummy, spit up milk, and increases the risk of obesity in later life.

The following tips let your baby control the pace of the feed and help to prevent over-eating. This helps your baby to enjoy their feed.

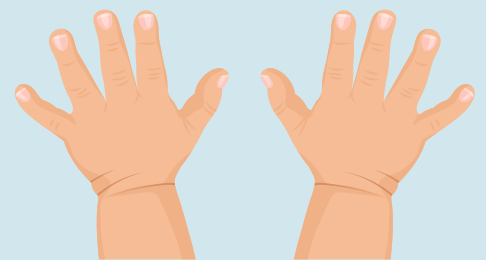
Let your baby control the pace of the feed

It may sound like a good thing for your baby to finish their bottle quickly, but it is healthier for babies to take regular pauses and short breaks when they drink. This helps them to regulate their appetite and reduce the risk of obesity in later life.

Start by holding your baby close to your body in a semi-upright position. Hold the bottle in a horizontal position. This prevents the milk from flowing too fast. This means baby only gets milk when they suck, which puts baby in control of the pace of the feed. When the baby is in control of the pace of the feed, it is a more enjoyable experience for your baby.

Watch your baby and follow cues for when they need a break. Signs that they may want a pause or a short break include;

- stopping sucking
- turning their head or pushing the bottle away
- milk spilling out of the corners of their mouth
- spreading or splaying their fingers and toes



To see whether your baby wants more milk, brush the teat against their nose or mouth. Do not force the teat into their mouth or make them finish the feed as this can be distressing for your baby.

Bottle feeding and your baby's development

Feeding is an important time for your baby. Babies feel more secure if most feeds are given by parents or main caregivers, especially in the early weeks, as this will help you to bond with each other. Because of this, we recommend keeping the number of people who feed baby to a minimum - ideally one or two special people.

Did you know....

When you respond lovingly to your baby and interact with them, it releases a hormone which helps their brain to grow!



Making feeds a pleasant experience

Simple things can make feeds a nice experience for your baby. During feeds try...



- making eye contact with your baby
- talking or singing to them
- skin to skin cuddles
- pacing the feed to your baby's cues

Top Tip

Try and alternate which side you hold your baby for a bottle feed. This helps to protect their natural head shape.

Keeping feeds safe



Your baby needs to be held safely and supervised throughout every feed. Never prop a bottle in your baby's mouth using a pillow or other device or leave your baby unattended when feeding. This is not safe because your baby may choke on or breathe in the milk, which can be life-threatening.

Did you know....

Breastmilk contains healthy bacteria which are very important for your baby. Formula milk does not contain these, so lots of skin to skin cuddles can help expose your baby to these important friendly bacteria.



Making up a powdered formula feed

Did you know....

Powdered infant formula may occasionally contain harmful bacteria. Although these bacteria are rare, they can make your baby very sick and can be life threatening.

Babies' immune systems are immature so it is important to make up formula feeds correctly to kill any bad bacteria which may be in the milk powder.

Step by step guide



- Make up feeds **one at a time** as needed
- Fill the kettle with at least **1 litre of fresh tap water** from the cold tap
- Boil the water. **Once the water is boiled, the feed must be made up within 30 minutes to make sure the water is still above 70 degrees Celsius.**
- Pour the boiled **water into the bottle first**, check the manufacturer's instructions for the amount of water.
- Loosely fill the scoop with infant formula and level with the flat edge of a clean, dry knife. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and only put the **recommended number of scoops** in the bottle.
- Replace the teat and lid, being careful not to touch the parts which will come into contact with baby's mouth
- **Shake** the bottle until all of the powder is dissolved
- **The milk needs cooled** so it is not too hot for your baby. You can cool the formula by holding the bottom half of the bottle under cold running water.
- Test the temperature before feeding your baby, drip a little milk onto your inner wrist - it should feel warm or cool, but **not hot.**

Additional safety information

When baby is finished, discard any of the feed that has not been used



Fill the kettle with **fresh** tap water each time - water which has been boiled before contains different amounts of minerals

Bottled or artificially softened water is not recommended for making up formula feeds - they may contain too much sodium or sulphate



If you are using cold water sterilising solution to sterilise your equipment, shake off any excess solution. You can also rinse with cooled boiled water from the kettle. Remember: un-boiled tap water is not sterile so don't rinse under the tap!

Feeding equipment can become damaged or worn with use. Using damaged equipment can be dangerous for your baby. Check for signs of wear each time you clean, sterilise, or use your equipment



Only use the scoop provided with the pack of formula you are using and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Scoop sizes differ so using a different scoop, or using a higher or lower number of scoops of powder than advised can be dangerous for your baby

Feed Preparation Machines

These machines are not recommended. The water may not be hot enough to kill any bacteria which may be present in the milk powder.

The safest way to make up formula feeds is to use water freshly boiled in a kettle.

Top Tip

A flask can be used to prepare hot water ready for formula feeds overnight or on the go. Pre-heat a flask for 1 minute with boiling water, empty, then re-fill with fresh boiling water. This water will stay hot enough to make up feeds for up to 3 hours.



Please speak to your midwife, GP, or health visitor if you have any questions about feeding your baby.

