

Paced Bottle Feeding

If your infant requires any supplement greater than 5ml due to difficulty breastfeeding, we recommend the **paced bottle technique**. This method of feeding requires a sucking technique very similar to breastfeeding. It also puts your infant in control of their feeding to prevent overfeeding.

For the infant who is unable to breastfeed correctly due to an uncoordinated or disorganized suck, this technique can be used to help your infant develop a more effective suck.

- Use a **straight bottle** (not a bent bottle) to prevent the pull of gravity and ensure good effort from your infant.
- Use a **rounded nipple** (not an “orthodontic” nipple) to elicit a suck more similar to the suck required at the breast.
- Ideally, a bottle-feeding should require an amount of time similar to time spent breastfeeding (**at least 10-15 minutes**). If your infant can finish a full bottle-feeding in less than 10 minutes, the flow is too fast.
- Position the baby so they are **sitting upright**, using one hand to support the infant’s head and neck.
- Hold the **bottle horizontally**, which removes gravity and encourages your infant to work harder for their meal.
- Gently brush the nipple down over the lower lip and wait for your infant to **open wide** before placing the entire nipple in the mouth.
- Once the nipple is entirely in the baby’s mouth, tip the bottom of the bottle just enough so that there is no air in the nipple.



Image: J Hum Lact 18(1), 2002

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- Please ask your lactation consultant or nurse for the supplementation guidelines appropriate for your infant based on their gestational age.
- If you are not able to express the recommended amount of colostrum needed for supplementation, then infant formula is recommended.
- Until your baby is latching consistently at the breast, we also recommend pumping with an electric piston style breast pump to establish a plentiful milk supply. **Pump after every feeding session for 15-20 minutes.**

Reference:

Kassing D. Bottle-feeding as a tool to reinforce breastfeeding. *J Hum Lact.* 2002 Feb;18(1):6-6

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