

Care and use of Nipple Shields

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A nipple shield is a flexible silicone nipple that is worn over the nipple during a feeding.

Nipple shields may be used:

1. When baby is having trouble attaching to the breast. e.g.; prematurity, inverted nipples
2. for a very fast flow of Breastmilk
3. To assist with sore or cracked nipples that have not responded to other treatments
4. After consultation with lactation consultant or senior midwife

There are different sizes and shapes of nipple shields for a variety of different breasts. It is important that you have the correct size for your breast and your baby's mouth. Using a nipple shield MAY reduce the breastmilk flow and affect your supply.



Breastfeed on demand.

Babies need approximately 8-12 feeds in a 24hr period. If you experience pain in your nipple when you are feeding or your nipple looks flattened after the feed please seek advice from your midwife/ lactation consultant.

How to Correctly Use a Nipple Shield

1. Wash your hands prior to touching the shield.
2. Push the tip of the shield half way inwards and grip the wings of the shield.
3. Cover the holes on the tip of the shield with your middle finger and place the shield centrally on your nipple.
4. Gently pull out the wings of the shield and roll toward your breast until it fits snugly and your nipple is drawn into the shield.
5. The cut out areas on the nipple shield should be placed at the baby's nose.

Note: It may be helpful to express some milk into the shield prior to baby attaching or rubbing breastmilk on the outside of shield

Correct Attachment when Using a Nipple Shield

Point the tip of the nipple shield at your baby's nose to encourage your baby to open their mouth wide. Bring the baby quickly onto the shield.

When a baby is well attached with a nipple shield:

- Their lips should be flared out wide.
- Baby's cheeks should look full when they are sucking
- You should not see any of the raised area of the shield, it should be completely in the baby's mouth.
- There should not be movement of the shield in and out of baby's mouth while they are sucking.

Feeding with a Nipple shield

It may be useful to use breast compression while baby is sucking to increase breastmilk flow to baby.

At the end of the feed you should see milk in the nipple shield.

Cleaning your Nipple Shield

After use wash your nipple shield with warm soapy water. When at home sterilise your nipple shield at least once a day. **See *cleaning and sterilising factsheet***

Is your Baby Getting Enough Milk?

- Observe baby's suckling. Slow rhythmic sucking and swallowing shows the baby is getting good amounts of milk.
- Baby should have 6-8 wet nappies each day after the first week
- Your baby should be weighed regularly to assess weight gain

How to Wean Your Baby off the Nipple Shield

The nipple shield can be very helpful with breastfeeding problems especially when your baby is very new. Once you and your baby are more experienced and you are confident with breastfeeding you can try to feed your baby directly from the breast.

This may take a few days or a week or more.

TIPS

- Try latching baby to breast with nipple shield then once the slow rhythmic sucking occurs de-latch baby from breast, remove nipple shield then relatch to breast.
- Try gently drawing out your nipple with your fingers or use a pump to draw out your nipples prior to baby latching to the breast
- Try latching baby to breast when baby is sleepy or comfort sucking.
- If you are using a nipple shield because of a fast flow of breastmilk try attaching the baby directly to the breast when your breasts are softer such as late afternoon.
- It may be helpful to seek advice from a lactation consultant or your Child and Family Health Nurse.

Support is available from

Lactation consultant

Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline
(1800 686 268)

<http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au>

Child & family health Nurse