

Paced Bottle Feeding

Why is paced bottle feeding a good idea?

This bottle feeding technique allows babies to use their oral and facial muscles to draw the nipple into their mouth and control the flow of milk versus having the milk flow be controlled only by gravity. By making the experience of bottle feeding closely match breastfeeding, babies may also be less likely to get used to the faster flow of a bottle and reject the breast.



Photo from California WIC – A mother paced bottle feeding her baby

Steps for paced bottle feeding:

1. Hold the baby in an upright or almost sitting position – supporting their upper back and neck from behind.
2. Hold the bottle horizontally, level with the ground, just filling the nipple with milk.
3. Tickle the baby's nose and upper lip with the bottle nipple until they open their mouth as wide as they can.
4. Let the baby come toward the nipple with a wide-open mouth to draw the nipple into their mouth.
5. During the feeding, if the baby stops sucking, tip the bottle down.
6. When the baby starts sucking again, tip the bottle back up.

How will I know if my baby is drinking too fast?

Gulping, taking catch-up breaths, leaking milk from mouth, a concerned facial expression or a baby who pulls away from the bottle are all indications the flow of the feeding is too fast.

Tip: It is tempting to try to force your baby to take more than they want, just to finish the bottle. This is not recommended. If you're worried about wasting precious expressed breast milk, heat up smaller amounts – maybe two ounces at a time – and provide more as needed.

Video resources:



[Paced Bottle Feeding](#) by The Milk Mob



24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline
1-800-833-4642

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