

Breastfeeding Support Services, Inc.

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BOTTLE-FEEDING THE BREASTFED BABY

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1. Use straight bottle, not bent.
2. Use bottle with small-mouthed opening, not a disposable or wide-mouthed bottle.
3. Nipple should have an old-fashioned long, round shape. The base of the nipple should be about 1 inch (25 mm.) across, and the base should preferably be tapered, not bulbous. The nipple should **not** be orthodontic, stubby, or shaped like a miniature human breast.
4. Nipple should be a slow-flow nipple, unless otherwise directed by the lactation consultant.
5. Support baby in an upright position. Babies younger than two months will usually need support for the lower back. This can be accomplished by the caregiver crossing her/his legs and setting the baby on the lower leg with back against higher leg. Or caregiver can place one foot on a footstool. If sitting in a chair with high arms, a pillow could be tucked against baby's back.
Caregiver can support baby's head and neck by placing the thumb behind one of the baby's ears and fingers behind the other ear. Hold head firmly enough to keep baby's chin up off chest.
6. Gently brush nipple **DOWN** over center of baby's lips. Pull nipple away from face and center nipple in front of baby's mouth. Pause. Wait for baby to open **WIDE**, like a yawn. If baby does not open **WIDE** after pausing, caregiver may repeat downward stroke of nipple. If baby still does not open **WIDE**, try gently tapping nipple 2-3 times on baby's lower lip. Pull nipple away from face and center nipple in front of baby's mouth. When baby opens **WIDE**, insert nipple all the way into mouth, so baby's lips touch the collar that holds the nipple onto the bottle.
7. Tip bottom of bottle down so that no milk is in the nipple. Have baby suck 5-6 times, getting no milk, to mimic waiting for let-down at breast.
8. Tip up bottom of bottle just enough so milk covers the hole in the nipple.
9. When there is very little food left in the bottle, lean baby's body back about 45 degrees. This will keep his head and neck in line, yet allow the bottle to tip for remainder of feeding.

Bottle-feeding baby in this manner should take approximately 15-20 minutes. If feedings consistently take 30 minutes or longer, please contact your lactation consultant.

This handout is based on information from the article: Kassing, D. "Bottle-Feeding as a Tool to Reinforce Breastfeeding." *Jrl Human Lact* 18 (1), 2002. The article won an international award for its usefulness.