



# Hints For Offering A Breastfed Baby A Bottle

Occasionally a breastfed baby balks at accepting an artificial nipple for his or her feeding. The following suggestions may help you when offering a bottle to a resisting baby.

1. It is often helpful to have someone other than Mom offer the bottle, especially if that someone is confident and patient with a fussy baby. Mom should be out of the room entirely.
2. Anticipate the baby's feeding cues. Try to offer the bottle before she's overly hungry. The more mellow she feels, the more likely she is to accept something new. Sometimes it helps to catch the baby before she is fully awake and instinct takes over.
3. Cuddle with the baby as the bottle is given, just as he is cuddled while nursing. If the baby resists this, try holding him with his back against caregiver's chest and let him look out into the room -the distraction may be helpful.
4. If baby resists being cuddled, try feeding her in an infant seat.
5. Baby may not like the taste of latex rubber, so try clear silicone nipples.
6. If the flow of milk from the nipple is too fast, try a slow flow nipple with a wide base.
7. Some babies do best if breastmilk is in the bottle and others do better if something else is offered, such as water. However, the AAP recommends that only breastmilk be fed to babies for the first six months. Please do not introduce additional liquids until after six months of age unless directed by your pediatrician.
8. Some babies prefer the fluid to be warm like the breast.
9. It may be helpful to warm the nipple under warm water, although a teething baby may prefer the nipple cold (chill in the refrigerator).
10. With a younger infant, try starting with an eyedropper, spoon, etc. first, then go to the nipple.
11. Let baby suck a clean finger first, then slip the nipple into the baby's mouth alongside the finger, then slip the finger out. (Be sure the fingernail is short to prevent injury).
12. If old enough, let baby play with an empty bottle for a day or two to become familiar with it.
13. Try short, frequent trials until baby takes the nipple without difficulty. It's better to try several short trials than have a major bout of screaming.
14. Try finger feeding with a bottle as a transitional method or as a way to get food into the baby who refuses the bottle alone, until Mom gets home to breastfeed.
15. Try a trainer cup with small holes. Some babies will go straight to a cup and bypass the bottle.
16. Dip the nipple in warm breastmilk.
17. Gently stimulate baby's mouth with the artificial nipple as is done with mom's nipple at the breast. Let the baby "mouth" the bottle nipple and become familiar with it.
18. Be patient. It is rare for a baby to not accept a bottle eventually.

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