



NCCU CLINICAL GUIDELINES
SECTION: 7

BREAST FEEDING

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Bottle feeding a breast feeding infant
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BOTTLE FEEDING (EBM OR FORMULA) A BREASTFEEDING INFANT

On some occasions it may be necessary to give a bottle to an infant who is establishing breast feeds. **Always** discuss with the mother before offering bottles to her infant in these situations:

- Transition to all suck feeds when the mother is not available. Generally >35 weeks corrected.
- Sub-optimal lactation.

At all times it is imperative that the mother's confidence and ability to breastfeed her infant be nurtured. She should be given the offer to room-in if possible.

Bottle feeds are only to be introduced at a pace that matches the infant's energy level and ability to suck. At 34 – 36 weeks most infants will have developed awake/sleep patterns and be capable of managing nutritive sucking with a coordinated pattern. Between 36 – 40 weeks healthy infants will maintain satisfactory growth with full oral feeding by demand.

FEEDING POSITION

Position is important and depends on the infants muscle tone. The head must be in alignment with the trunk and all limbs must be supported.

Preterm infants especially cannot always cope with the cradled semi-recumbent posture of the term infants and may cope better if supported in a semi-upright position or an elevated side-lying position. Careful attention to correct alignment is necessary.

For further information on bottle feeding techniques see Nutrition.

RECOMMENDED FURTHER READING

- J. Riordan, K. Wambach. Breastfeeding and Human Lactation 4th Edition 2009
- R. Mannel, P.J. Martens, M. Walker (Eds). Core Curriculum for Lactation Consultant Practice. 3rd Edition 2012
- W. Brodribb (Ed). Breastfeeding Management, 4th Edition 2012.
- R. Lawrence, R. Lawrence. Breastfeeding: A Guide for the Medical Profession 7th Edition, 2010