



Bye Bye Baby Bottle

Helping your child to stop using a bottle

Babies need only breastmilk for the first 6 months of life. Continue breastfeeding for up to 2 years and beyond with the addition of iron-rich solid foods when baby is around 6 months old and showing signs of readiness. If you have made an informed decision to use a bottle to feed your baby, you might find this information helpful.

How to make the transition easier?

Starting at around 6 months of age, you can help your baby learn to drink from an open cup. This will help make the transition from bottle feeding easier later on. Offer your baby small sips of water from an open cup in between meals and snacks.

Why stop using the bottle?

Children who continue to use a bottle with any liquid other than water after 1 year of age are more likely to:

- Develop tooth decay
- Grow too slowly or too fast
- Not get enough vitamins and minerals
- Have iron-deficiency anemia

What about sippy cups?

There is no need to offer your child a "sippy" cup. Babies are able to learn to drink from an open cup safely at a young age – with your help at first!

- If you use a "sippy" cup, take out the valve to teach your child to drink without sucking.



Tips to help your child say bye bye to the bottle:

1. Try replacing one mid-day bottle with a cup. Once your child is used to this, take away another bottle. Keep doing this until they are ready to give up the last bottle.
2. Make sure your child eats enough during the day
 - Offer 3 meals and 2-3 snacks at regular times each day, along with breastfeeding.
 - Offer milk in an open cup with meals and snacks, and water in an open cup between meals. Avoid letting your child sip on milk or juice throughout the day as this can fill them up and they may not be hungry for meals. It may also cause tooth decay.
 - Children over 12 months need about 2 cups (500mL/16 oz.) of milk each day.
3. When offering drinks that you would usually offer in a bottle, give your child choices that only involve a cup. For example, "Would you like the milk in your blue cup or red cup?"
4. Bottles are soothing. Lots of extra cuddles will help your child adjust to this change.
5. "Lose" the bottle or leave it at home.
6. Make the cup extra-special by having someone special give your child a new cup or let your child choose a cup at the store.
7. Celebrate successes. Reward your child with praise during the transition.



For more information, contact the Health ACTION Line at 1-800-660-8583 or visit our website www.healthunit.org/children/

