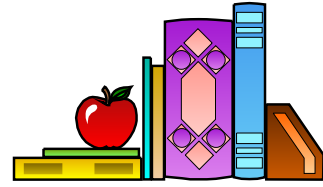


Pacifiers



When the newborn roots, sucks on his hands or fists and/or fusses he is exhibiting feeding cues and needs to be fed. When the baby receives a pacifier rather than nursing during the first few weeks, he does not receive the calories needed for him to regain the weight he lost after his birth. The newborn needs food in order to stimulate him to begin to stool frequently and thereby decrease his chance of developing jaundice.

Babies do not need a pacifier to learn how to suck.

Research has shown that breastfed infants who use a pacifier in the first month of life breastfeed for a shorter period of time. The use of a pacifier has been associated with a lower milk supply. Engorgement and sore nipples are also more common if the infant uses a pacifier in the early weeks of life.

Infants who routinely use a pacifier have more infections, such as ear infections, wheezing, diarrhea, colic and vomiting. They are also more likely to develop thrush in their mouths and cavities in their teeth.

Prolonged use of pacifiers is associated with delayed onset of speech and increases the chance of the child requiring orthodontia (braces) because of the pressure of the pacifier against the roof of the mouth and front teeth.

In 2005, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended the use of pacifiers during sleep as it was thought that it might decrease the risk of SIDS. Specifically they stated:

“The pacifier should be used when placing the infant down for sleep and not be reinserted once the infant falls asleep. If the infant refuses the pacifier, he or she should not be forced to take it.

Pacifiers should not be coated in any sweet solution.

Pacifiers should be cleaned often and replaced regularly.

For breastfed infants, delay pacifier introduction until 1 month of age to ensure that breastfeeding is firmly established.”

If you do choose to use a pacifier when you are “nursed out,” then hold your baby close to you while you give it to him for a short period of time rather than simply using it to get him to sleep while he is in a crib or bassinet. Be careful that you do not become “addicted” to the use of the pacifier to keep your baby from expressing himself!