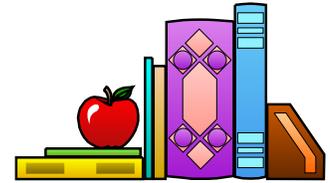


"Pacing" Bottle Feeds



It is estimated by one researcher that bottle fed babies will consume up to 30,000 calories more than their breastfed playmates by the age of 8 months. Now that's a lot of extra calories! Why do they eat so much more than they actually need? No one really knows, but it is thought that perhaps there are several factors related to the act of bottle feeding itself.

1. The "clean bottle club". Encouraging the baby to finish just the last little bit that is in the bottle which may be more than the baby needs.
2. Babies who gulp down the milk so fast that their brains don't register "full" before their tummies are overfull.
3. Making the holes in the bottle bigger so the baby will eat a bit faster and get it over with.
4. Paying attention to the lines and ounces on the bottle, and not watching the baby's cues.

All of which brings us to "pacing" bottle feeds – a technique that is imperative to use for preterm and near term babies, and one that is very good to use in full term babies in the first few months.

1. Snuggle the baby close to you in a semi-sitting position.
2. Hold the bottle with the tip of the nipple just under the baby's nose. When she is ready for it, she'll open her mouth and "ask" for it.
3. After 4-6 swallows take the bottle out of her mouth and put the tip of the nipple just under her nose again. When she's ready for the next bit, she'll open her mouth again. Or, leave the nipple in the baby's mouth, sit her upright and tip the bottle down so there is no fluid in the nipple. After she rests and takes a few breaths, you can start feeding again.
4. Watch her face – if you see that she breathes heavily and quickly for a few seconds, trying to catch her breath reduce the number of swallows that you let her have. As you give her this chance to breathe, the lines in her face will relax, and then she'll be ready for more.
5. Continue pacing her feeds until she closes her mouth, purses her lips and "tells" you she doesn't want any more. You will see her slowing down before this.
6. You may find that even 6 swallows is too much for the baby to handle all at once, and you may need to back up to 3 or 4 for a day or so while she is getting used to handling all that fluid at one time.
7. It's tempting to put the baby in the car seat and prop the bottle, but not only is that dangerous, meal time should be a social time for both you and the baby. Pacing the feeds helps you to accomplish this social activity and enjoy your little one.