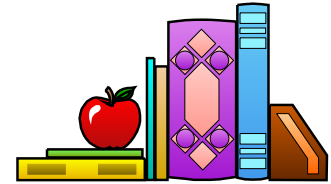


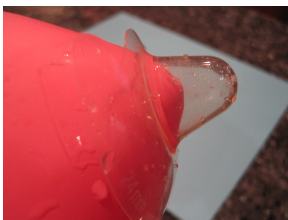
Using a Nipple Shield



Use of a nipple shield in certain situations can be very helpful, but it shouldn't be used at the first sign of breastfeeding challenges. Some mom/baby couples who might benefit from using a shield would be a mom with very flat nipples or a baby who simply can't figure out how to latch even though he is awake, rooting, and ready to nurse. Sometimes it may help the baby with a tongue tie be able to latch. Some late preterm or low birth-weight babies may be able to transfer milk better when they are using a shield. Occasionally moms may want to use one when her nipples are sore and are healing.

Regardless of the reason, it is important that you know how to put the shield on correctly. A mom whose milk supply goes down when she is using a shield may be a mom who has not been taught how to put it on.

- Make sure your nipple fits into the shield comfortably. A shield that is too small will compress your milk ducts and decrease the amount of milk the baby gets
- Wetting the shield with warm water sometimes makes putting it on a bit easier
- Turn the shield almost inside out like a little sombrero
- Smooth the shield over the breast, tugging at the nipple portion of the shield a little bit so your nipple extends into the shield
- Make sure the baby takes in a big mouthful of breast tissue – not latching on only to the nipple part



Make sure you are following up with your IBCLC or peer counselor frequently to see that the baby is getting enough milk and is gaining weight. It is recommended that you pump or hand express several times a day until you know that your milk supply is good and the baby is getting enough.

Once your IBCLC sees that you are doing well with the shield, you can decrease the number of times that you are pumping.

Babies can become dependent on the shield, so once you are both doing well and having good feedings together, you can begin to wean him off the shield by trying him on the breast without it a couple of feedings a day, or by starting him with the shield, taking the shield off in the middle of the feeding and getting him to latch without it.