

# Supplementary feeds for healthy, term babies

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## SUPPLEMENTARY FEEDS FOR NEWBORNS

The World Health Organization and the Australian Infant Feeding Guidelines recommend breastmilk as the only food until around six months of age. The slow introduction of solid foods after six months and continued breastfeeding up until the age of two years is recommended.

In the first six months, any feeds given in place or addition to breastfeeds are called supplementary feeds.

Additional feeds of water, glucose and water or formula can hinder getting breastfeeding underway and are not recommended for well babies.

**If your baby is unable to take a feed directly from the breast, expressed breastmilk is the best option.**

Studies have shown that breastfeeding a healthy baby according to a baby's need, without a supplement (other food):

- Encourages early milk production (within 24 to 48 hours)

- Decreases the likelihood of jaundice
- Helps babies gain weight better
- Can help you breastfeed for longer.

**Breastfeeding is a new experience for you and your baby. Allow some time for you and your baby to learn to breastfeed and seek support if having any difficulty.**

## IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT NOT HAVING ENOUGH MILK:

- Offer both breasts two times at each feed
- Express after feeds and give breastmilk as a top up
- Offer a feed instead of a dummy
- Increase skin-to-skin contact before, during and after feeds
- Read factsheet *Increasing Your Breastmilk Supply*.

### Did you know?

- Most women have enough milk in the breast 30 minutes after a feed to give a top up feed.

- Any infant formula interferes with the protection against infection that colostrum and breastmilk is creating in your baby's gut.
- Use of a dummy or teat can stop a baby sucking well in the early days of breastfeeding.
- If your baby needs extra milk, try using a cup instead of a bottle.
- Infant formula is more slowly digested than breastmilk. A baby might need to feed less often which can affect a mother's milk supply.
- Allergies and food reactions in infants are common and may be associated with a variety of foods including cow's milk formula. Goat and soy infant formula are not recommended.

Extra support may be gained from your:

- Midwife
- Child and Family Health Nurse
- Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)
- Australian Breastfeeding Association Counsellor.

## Contacts

- Your local Maternity Unit.
- Your Child and Family Health Centre.
- Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline  
Ph: 1800 686 268, 7 days a week, or visit [www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)
- MotherSafe (Medications in Pregnancy & Lactation Service)  
Ph: (02) 9382 6539 or 1800 647 848 if outside the Sydney Metropolitan area. Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm.
- For a Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)  
[www.lcanz.org/find-a-consultant.htm](http://www.lcanz.org/find-a-consultant.htm)
- After-hours telephone advice lines are listed in your baby's *Personal Health Record* (Blue Book).

## References

Eat for Health, NHMRC Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers 2012.  
Lang S, 1997. Breastfeeding Special Care Babies. Bailliere Tindall.  
Australian Breastfeeding Association 2006. Breastfeeding...naturally.