



NIPPLE SHIELDS

HOW & WHEN TO USE NIPPLE SHIELDS CORRECTLY

Nipple Shields



A nipple shield is a flexible silicone nipple that is placed over a nipple during a breastfeed. Nipple shields should be considered a **short-term** solution and

should be used under the guidance of a midwife or lactation consultant as they come with risks, (see below).



Before you use a nipple shield, contact your midwife or a lactation consultant, (IBCLC) to ensure you have the correct size and support as misuse can lead to further nipple damage and feeding issues. Nipple shields should not be used if you only have sore or damaged nipples as they could make things worse.

REASONS TO USE A NIPPLE SHIELD

Nipple shields can certainly improve breastfeeding in some cases like premature babies, flat or inverted nipples, tongue-ties, high palate, torticollis or a baby who has been bottle feeding and is learning to feed at the breast.

RISKS OF USING A NIPPLE SHIELD

- Poor milk transfer:** Babies may not be able to effectively transfer milk using the nipple shield.
- Decreased supply:** Mum's milk supply could decrease if baby isn't effectively stimulating her milk supply or draining the breast.
- Blocked ducts:** from inefficient milk drainage due to the shield acting as a transfer barrier.
- Shield dependence or nipple confusion:** Babies can become dependant on the shield and/or it can change the way that latch onto the breast.

HOW TO USE A NIPPLE SHIELD CORRECTLY

It is important to use a nipple shield correctly. Click the video link below or You Tube Search: How to use a nipple shield Breastfeeding Success



WHAT TO CHECK WHILE FEEDING WITH SHIELDS

While using a shield check the following to ensure baby is getting enough milk:

- ♥ listen for frequent swallowing during a feed.
- ♥ feel that your breast is soft after the feed.
- ♥ at least 6 heavy, wet nappies in 24-hours
- ♥ 3 stools daily if < 6 weeks old, 1 daily if older.
- ♥ baby has had good weight gains.

CLEANING NIPPLE SHIELDS

Nipple shields do not need to be sterilised. Wash in hot soapy water and rinse. Air dry and store in a dry, clean covered container.

WEANING OFF NIPPLE SHIELDS

Weaning off nipple shields is a slow process and requires patience. It can take weeks to achieve. Ask your midwife or IBCLC for support.

- ♥ Offer your baby a breastfeed as soon as he wakes from a sleep.
- ♥ Start the feed as normal with the shield, then:
- ♥ Remove the nipple shield after a minute or two of feeding and try to latch without it.
- ♥ Have as much skin-to-skin contact between you and your baby as possible when feeding.
- ♥ Keep the breast a "happy place": If it doesn't work, don't persist until your baby is upset. Simply use the nipple shield again and try again later. Attempt to latch your baby without the shield at as many feeds as possible.

Produced by Janet McGuinness for the Gisborne Lactation Consultant Service. 2020 www.breastfeedingeastcoast.nz

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