

Cup Feeding Guide and Competency for Parents

We encourage all new mums to breastfeed their babies. If your baby is finding it difficult to breastfeed refer to the **information leaflet: Babies who do not breastfeed effectively.**

To give you and your baby plenty of opportunity to learn to breastfeed

- Keep your baby in **skin to skin** cuddles.
- Offer a breastfeed whenever your baby shows all early **feeding cues** (rooting, gaping, hands to mouth)
- Wake your baby to feed no later than 2 hours after the start of their last feed.
- If your baby has not breastfed effectively, give expressed breastmilk to your baby no later than 3 hours after the start of their last feed.
- Put your baby back in to skin to skin and **repeat every 2-3 hours** until they start latching and breastfeeding effectively.



For how to hand express and recognise effective positioning and attachment
<https://globalhealthmedia.org/videos/breastfeeding/>

It is safe and advisable to use a breast pump from birth on a sensitive setting for 15 minutes to stimulate your breasts and activate your prolactin receptors until your baby is breastfeeding effectively.

Colostrum comes in tiny quantities and you will not express any milk by using the breast pump in the early days. You are using the pump simply to stimulate your breasts so continue to collect your colostrum by hand.

Combine hand expressing and using a breast pump at least 8 times in 24 hours to stimulate and maximise your milk production.

Giving your breastmilk to your baby

We suggest that you avoid giving your baby a teat until breastfeeding has been established, as sucking on a teat uses a different sucking action. This may cause confusion for your baby, who may then find it difficult to feed from the breast.

Syringe feeding

Syringe feeding should be used during the first few days when you need to give your baby small amounts of colostrum. Once your colostrum transitions to milk, it becomes less viscous and increases in volume so it is safer to use a sterilised feeding cup. This allows babies to take the milk at their own pace.



How to give your colostrum by syringe:

- Wash your hands before you start.
- Hold your baby in an upright position and gently syringe no more than 0.2 millilitres into your baby's mouth at a time. Feed the colostrum in between their gum and cheek or onto their tongue. Allow your baby to swallow before giving them another 0.2 millilitres and continue to do this until the feed has ended.

Please ensure you are well informed and feel competent before syringe feeding your baby.

Cup feeding

It is beneficial to use a cup rather than a bottle with a teat to protect breastfeeding but cup feeding must not replace breastfeeding without a very good reason.



Cup feeding encourages your baby to use their tongue and lower jaw in a similar way as they would when breastfeeding. They are also able to smell and enjoy the milk when using a cup.

A baby can take as much or little from a cup as they would like according to their skills and appetite. It is important to respond to your baby's cues.

Babies who may require cup feeding include:

- Babies whose medical condition is stable and whose suck/swallow reflex has been established. SALT should be consulted when appropriate. The baby should be alert and looking for a feed but breastfeeding not a viable option for example overnight on NICU if the mother has been discharged home.
- Babies who require supplementary feeds if medically indicated of either expressed breast milk (MEBM) or artificial milk (if there is not enough expressed breast milk available).
- Babies who are stressed/ reluctant to latch can be encouraged to breastfeed with a small cup feed of expressed breastmilk first.
- Babies whose mothers are unable to breast feed their baby directly due to temporary illness.
- Babies whose sucking ability may be compromised for any reason, such as Downs Syndrome or cleft lip/palate. **This should only happen after prior discussion with the Neonatal Team.**

How to give your baby a cup feed:

- Wash your hands and use a sterilised cup at each feed.
- Fill the cup about a third full (20ml)
- Wrap your baby securely in a blanket to keep their hands out of the way .
- Sit your baby in an upright position on your lap to prevent choking.
- Place the cup so that it is gently resting on your baby's lower lip. Do not press it down. The cup should be tipped so that the milk touches your baby's lip. Wait and your baby will sniff the milk, push their tongue forward and start to lap or drink the milk.
- Do not tip the milk into their mouth as this may cause them to choke. Keep your baby sat upright and the cup still. Do not move the cup away when they stop drinking.
- Your baby will drink at their own pace with breaks when they will have a breather. Respond to your baby's cues.
- If they finish the milk in the cup and remain calm, alert and rooting, refill it and offer more milk. Your baby may turn their head, close their mouth or fall asleep to show that they have finished. A preterm baby may need to take the remainder of their feed by NGT if there is undrunk milk remaining.

Please ensure you are well informed and feel competent before cup feeding your baby.

Competency: (staff and parents please sign)

Syringe feeding demonstration observed: Staff _____

Parents _____

Parent's technique has been observed as correct: Staff _____

Parents _____

Cup feeding demonstration observed: Staff _____

Parents _____

Parent's technique has been observed as correct: Staff _____

Parents _____

Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net. If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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We can provide interpreters for a variety of languages, information in larger print or other formats (e.g. audio) - please call us on 01932 723553.



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 اگر آپ اس کا اردو زبان میں ترجمہ چاہتے ہیں، تو براؤزر میں اس فون نمبر 01932 723553 پر رابطہ کریں
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 Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

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