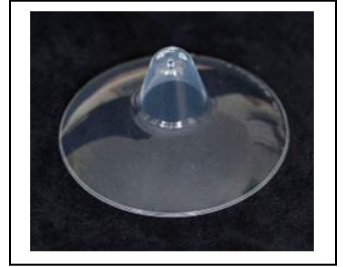


Care Plan for Breastfeeding Your Baby with a Nipple Shield

Some babies have difficulty latching on and breastfeeding. If this is the case, your lactation consultant may suggest using a nipple shield. A nipple shield is made from thin, stretchy silicone and is worn over the mother's nipple and part of the areola. It has holes in the tip of the nipple shield to allow the milk to flow through. It is important for a lactation consultant or nurse to help you get correct fit and show you how to latch baby. The baby's mouth should be deeply latched onto the mother's nipple and areola to remove milk.



Reasons for using a nipple shield:

When latching onto the breast, the baby needs to draw mother's nipple deeply into the mouth to stimulate sucking and remove milk. If not, there are situations when a nipple shield can help:

- When baby:
 - Is premature or late preterm
 - Has Down's Syndrome or other cause of low muscle tone
 - Has a tongue tie or high palate
 - Has had bottles and/or pacifiers and transitioning to breastfeeding
- When mother's nipples are:
 - flat, short, or inverted
 - too soft for baby to grasp
 - very firm and non-elastic
 - painful or damaged due to shallow latching baby or baby has a tongue tie



How to apply a nipple shield:

The nipple shield will have directions for use.

- Hold the nipple shield with both hands and fold the nipple shield back on itself so that it looks like a sombrero hat
- Your nipple should be drawn into the shaft of the nipple shield as you flip it back over your nipple
- Smooth out the flat edges over your areola
- If desired, wet the nipple shield with water or breast milk to help it stay on your breast



Important things to know and do when using a nipple shield:

- **Deep latch:** The baby's mouth should be deeply latched onto the mother's nipple and areola to remove milk.
 - A baby shallowly latched—whether on the nipple or the nipple shield—will not get enough milk at a feeding and not gain weight
 - When baby is shallowly latched, mother's milk production is not stimulated, milk production will decrease, and her nipples will get sore
- **Signs of Effective breastfeeding:** See below).
- **Establish mother's milk production:** Before mother's milk comes in it is difficult to know if baby is getting enough milk when mom is using a nipple shield.

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- Mother should pump her milk after every breastfeeding when using a nipple shield until her milk “comes in” and baby is gaining weight when weighed at the pediatrician’s office.
- Baby can be given whatever mother pumps and/or hand expresses after breastfeeding
- **Confirm that your baby is breastfeeding effectively with the nipple shield** before you stop pumping and giving your milk. Do this by:
 - Weight checks at pediatrician ensuring that baby is gaining appropriately
 - Speaking with a lactation consultant (TriHealth Breastfeeding Helpline (513-862-7867))

Breastfeeding with a nipple shield:

The technique for breastfeeding baby onto the breast is similar with a nipple shield:

- When baby opens widely latch him/her on deeply
- Lips should be resting on your areola, not on shaft of nipple shield
- You should **NOT** feel pain
- Baby should initiate breastfeeding by sucking and swallowing



Signs of Effective Breastfeeding:

- Baby is breastfeeding 8-12+ times in 24 hours (beginning day 2 of life)
- Breastfeeding sessions are lasting 10-30 minutes per breast
- Baby is sucking and swallowing with his jaw dropping and you hear swallows
- Breastfeeding is comfortable for you (no nipple or breast pain)
- By days 3-5 there should be milk in the tip of nipple shield after baby detaches from your breast
- By day 4 of life your baby’s stool should be turning yellow in color and she/he should have at least 4 stools and 6 wet diapers in 24 hours
- Baby appears to be satisfied after breastfeeding
- Baby has not lost more than 10% of his birth weight
- Baby should be gaining between 2/3 to 1 oz per day when your milk comes in



How to clean the nipple shield:

- Wash the nipple shield with soap and water and rinse after each use
- It can be boiled once per day if desired

Weaning from the nipple shield

- You may be using a nipple shield for several weeks--some babies and moms might need it longer
- If you would like to wean from the nipple shield, please call a lactation consultant for assistance at: **TriHealth Breastfeeding Care Center (513-862-7867)**

Selected references available upon request