



Breastfeeding
Committee
for Saskatchewan

www.thebcs.ca

Important:

Babies need to learn how to breastfeed. Soothers may interfere with baby learning to open big and to have a mouth full.

Mothers need baby suckling in order to produce milk and to keep a good supply. Soothers may take away suckling time at the breast.

For further information contact:

Local Public Health Nurse

International Board Certified
Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)

Local breastfeeding support
Group

Saskatchewan HealthLine 811

Pacifier Use and the Initiation of Breastfeeding

Using a pacifier (soother) in the newborn period may make breastfeeding difficult and may also interfere with how long a baby nurses (1).

Pacifiers are often used to calm a fussy or crying baby.

Methods of soothing an infant, such as breastfeeding, skin-to-skin contact, walking/carrying baby in an upright position, rocking, massage, music or swaddling are recommended to help support your breastfeeding relationship.

WAYS TO CALM A FUSSY BABY

- If your baby cries or fusses, check to see if your baby needs a diaper change or a burp. If not, put your baby to the breast. If baby does not want to feed, try walking/carrying or rocking your baby gently. These motions are soothing to babies. A safety approved baby sling is also recommended.
- Avoid loud and sudden noises. Play soft, soothing music. Sing or hum and turn off the television.
- Give your baby a warm bath and try to stroke or massage his or her back, arms and legs. Cuddle baby skin-to-skin.
- Take your baby for a stroll, car ride or use an infant swing for short periods.

REASONS NOT TO USE A PACIFIER REGULARLY

- May deprive your baby of food and hydration.
- May interfere with breastfeeding (both latch and supply).
- Long periods of soother use may affect your baby's growth & development (less interaction with caregivers) (2).
- Prolonged pacifier use interferes with tooth formation and muscle development (3).
- Pacifier use is associated with ear infections (4), diarrhea (5).
- Pacifier use is strongly related to early weaning (6), (7), (8).
- Baby may be or become allergic to latex (9).
- Choking hazard (9).
- Product Recalls (9).



Breastfeeding
Committee
for Saskatchewan

www.thebcs.ca

Selective use and safe use cannot be over-emphasized to those who choose to use a pacifier (10).

References:

1. Howard & Howard et al. 2003. Randomized Clinical trial of Pacifier use and bottlefeeding or cupfeeding and their effects on Breastfeeding. *Pediatrics* Vol III No 3 March 511-518.
2. Gale & Martyn (1996) Breastfeeding, Dummy use and adult intelligence. *Lancet* 347: 1072– 75 APR.
3. Nowak AJ, et al. Oral habits and orofacial environment. development. <http://www.uptodate.com/home>. Accessed June 16, 2014.
4. Niemela, M. 2000. Pacifier Risk: Otitis Media. *Pediatrics*. Sept 106 (3). 483-8.
5. North et al. 1999. Pacifier use and morbidity in the first 6 months of life. 103(3).
6. Howard et al. 1999. The effects of early pacifier use on breastfeeding duration *Pediatrics*. 103(3).
7. Kronborg, H. & Vaeth, M. 2009. How are effective breastfeeding techniques and pacifier userelated to breastfeeding problems and breastfeeding duration. *Birth* 36 (1): 34-42. March.
8. Schwartz, R. & Guthrie, K. 2008. *Infant Pacifiers: An overview*. Clinical Pediatrics Vol 47 No 4, 327-331 May. Sage Publications.
9. Castilho,S.& Rocha,A. 2009. Pacifier Habit: history and multidisciplinary view. *J Pediatr (Rio J)* 85(6): 480-489
10. American Academy of Pediatrics: (www.aap.org) 2014

Additional references:

- Le Leche League Canada: (www.lllc.ca)
- www.drjacknewman.com (click "breastfeeding help")

IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE A PACIFIER

NOTE: Soothers are not recommended for full term healthy babies until 4 – 6 weeks of life when breastfeeding is well established

- Select a safe, one-piece pacifier that has a soft nipple (soft enough to flatten out against the roof of mouth when sucking). Clean pacifier following manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not use a pacifier to replace or delay meals. Offer only after or between feedings when you are sure your baby is not hungry.
- Do not put pacifiers in your mouth. Germs may be transferred to your baby, increasing the risk of cavities later on as baby teeth come in.
- Never tie a pacifier to the crib or around your baby's neck. This is very dangerous and could result in serious injury or even death.
- Do not use the nipple of a baby bottle as a pacifier – if it is sucked too hard the nipple can pop out of the ring and choke your baby.
- Check your baby's pacifier frequently for discoloration, cracks or tears in the rubber. Replace damaged pacifiers immediately.
- If your nipples become sore or baby is not gaining well, discontinue pacifier and call for help.

There may be a medical reason if your baby fusses and cries frequently. If you notice an increase in this behavior or it becomes more intense, contact your doctor and have your baby checked.

NOTE: A pacifier might be recommended *by a health care professional, in certain situations, such as in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)* (10).