

HELPFUL HINTS

Changing to a cup can be difficult for your baby. Give a little extra love, attention and praise to your baby at this time.

All babies spill liquids when learning to use a cup. Be patient!

Never put your baby to bed with a bottle and never prop a bottle. This can cause tooth decay and ear infections.

The longer you delay using a cup, the more attached to the bottle your baby will become and the harder it will be to break this habit.

If your baby strongly resists parting with a bottle, offer one with plain water. This will not be as interesting as the milk and may speed weaning.



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WEANING



your bottlefed baby



Weaning is a gradual change from bottle feeding to cup feeding. It may take several months to complete the weaning process. Your baby may start using the cup at 5 or 6 months and be using the cup completely by 12 to 18 months of age. The longer you wait to wean your baby, the more difficult the process will be, and the more problems may occur. Here are some tips to help you with the weaning process.


WHEN IS MY BABY READY TO USE A CUP?

Your baby is ready for a cup when he can sit up and is beginning to feed himself. Also, he should be able to hold a cup and drink from it without spilling. You may begin to introduce a cup when your baby is 5 to 6 months of age.

WHY SHOULD MY BABY USE A CUP?

- ❖ **To Help with Development** - Your baby learns to develop new muscles and improve coordination when he uses a cup. Drinking from a cup also helps to develop your baby's sense of independence.
- ❖ **To Prevent Tooth Decay** - After one year of age, feeding liquids from a bottle can cause tooth decay. This is called nursing bottle syndrome. The continuous flow of formula, milk, juice or sweetened liquid from a bottle over the teeth may cause decay. The top four upper front teeth usually are affected.
- ❖ **To Prevent Overweight & Anemia** - Using a cup keeps your baby from drinking too much milk. Infants often use bottles as pacifiers. This means they may drink more milk and eat less solid food than is needed by their bodies. Iron-deficiency anemia and overweight are common in children who remain on the bottle after 12 to 18 months of age.

HOW CAN I HELP MY BABY TO USE A CUP?

- ❖ No special cup is needed but it may be easier to use a plastic cup with a weighted bottom, two handles and lid with a spout. This helps your baby have better control and may prevent spills.
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- ❖ Try introducing the cup during your baby's bath when spilling doesn't matter.
 - ❖ Drink from a cup along with him to show him how.
 - ❖ Offer a small amount of water or juice from the cup. Try different juices.
 - ❖ Serve juice rather than soft drinks, fruit drinks or kool-aids in a cup. Ades and drinks are mainly sugar and water. They provide few nutrients.
 - ❖ Infants should be given formula for the first year of life. But formula may be offered in a cup when you child is 8 to 9 months of age.
 - ❖ Once your baby turns one year of age, offer whole milk instead of formula in the cup at mealtime.