

Non- Nutritive Sucking

Neonatal Unit

Patient Information Leaflet

Under review

Welcome to Neonatal Unit

This leaflet is to provide you with the information you need before reaching a decision on whether or not you are happy to give your baby a dummy.

Dummies and breast feeding can be used as forms of non-nutritive sucking (where a baby sucks without receiving any milk). For preterm babies (babies born before 37 weeks) or babies who are admitted onto the neonatal unit, non-nutritive sucking by use of a dummy may be offered.

Your wishes as parents are very important and it is your choice whether your baby has a dummy or not, whether you choose to breast or formula feed.

Benefits of Non-Nutritive Sucking

Research suggests that offering short periods of non-nutritive sucking for ill and premature babies can:

- Help to soothe a baby during tests and procedures.
- Reduce the experience of some pain.
- Help with breathing.
- Teach the baby to co-ordinate sucking and swallowing, which promotes earlier oral feeding.
- Have a calming effect so a baby may use less energy, which may help improve baby's growth and weight.
- Give a pleasant feeling in baby's mouth.
- Help your baby learn to suck and therefore help feeding.
- Stimulate the stomach to make the juices that help the baby digest milk more easily and so improve growth.
- Decrease the time the baby may have to stay in hospital.
- Help wake your baby up for a feed if bottle feeding.

Disadvantages of Non-Nutritive Sucking

Research suggests that offering short periods of non-nutritive sucking for ill and premature babies can:

- Make your baby more reluctant to breast feed. This is because sucking on a dummy is different to sucking technique involved in breast feeding.
- Interfere with the baby's ability to breast feed on demand.
- Lead to less feeds. Babies communicate their need to feed by using their mouth to lick, move and open (feeding cues). Use of a dummy may hide these feeding cues.

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Giving your baby a dummy

There are special dummies we provide for very small babies (less than 1.7Kg or 3lb 12 oz). If your baby is bigger than 1.7Kg, you may choose to buy your own dummy or use one of ours.

- Your baby's dummy will be stored in a pot of sterilising fluid kept near to their incubator or cot. Your baby's name will be on the pot along with the date that the sterilising solution was last changed.
- Before giving the dummy to your baby, you may wish to rinse it in sterile water. Please ask your baby's nurse about this
- When giving your baby a dummy try to gently touch the dummy against baby's lips. When the mouth opens wide place the dummy on top of the tongue. You may need to hold it in place until they begin to suck
- Allow your baby to suck on the dummy for a couple of minutes before and during an uncomfortable procedure, or if unsettled, until they are calm and resting quietly. If non-nutritive sucking is being used to encourage feeding, it should begin for a couple of minutes before and then during and for a short while after the tube feed.
- When your baby no longer needs the dummy, wash it in warm soapy water, rinse with clean water and then place it back into the sterilising fluid

Regard the dummy as a short-term, not a long-term habit. It is advised that healthy, term babies are weaned off dummies as soon as possible.

Further information:

- <http://www.babycentre.co.uk/a8491/what-is-nipple-confusion>
- <http://www.babylink.info/edinburgh/ParentRights/NonNutrSuck.aspx>
- http://www.neonatal-nursing.co.uk/pdf/inf_012_nsp.pdf [Accessed 17th May 2013]
- Harding CM, Law J, Pring T (2006) The use of non-nutritive sucking to promote functional sucking skills in premature infants: An exploratory trial. *Infant*, 2(6):238-40, 42-3.

If you have any questions or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet please contact:

The Neonatal Unit: 01384 456111 extension 3364.

Please use this space for any notes you may wish to make:

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This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 0730510

ਜੇਕਰ ਇਹ ਲੀਫਲੈੱਟ (ਛੋਟਾ ਇਸਤਿਹਾਰ) ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ) ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ਟ ਇੰਨਫਰਮੇਸ਼ਨ ਕੋ-ਆੱਰਡੀਨੇਟਰ ਨਾਲ **0800 0730510** ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

यदि आपको यह दस्तावेज़ अपनी भाषा में चाहिए तो पेशन्ट इनफरमेशन को-आरडीनेटर को टैलीफ़ोन नम्बर **0800 0730510** पर फ़ोन करें।

જો તમને આ પત્રિકા તમારી પોતાની ભાષા (ગુજરાતી)માં જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને પેશન્ટ ઈન્ફોર્મેશન કો-ઓર્ડીનેટરનો **0800 0730510** પર સંપર્ક કરો.

आपनि यदि এই প্রচারপত্রটি আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে পেশেন্ট ইনফরমেশন কো-অর্ডিনেটরের সাথে **0800 0730510** এই নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

إذا كنت ترغب هذه الوريقة مترجمة بلغتك الاصلية (اللغة العربية) , فرجاءاً اتصل بمنسق المعلومات للمريض
0800 0730510 على التالفون Information Co-ordinator

مہم ضرورت اریف ایٹ کوٹھا زبان (اردو) میں حاصل کرنے کے لئے روبروہائی ٹیلیفون نمبر **0800 0730510** پروفٹ انفورمیشن کو-آورڈینٹر (مریٹوں کے لئے معلومات کی فراہمی کے سلسلے میں) کے ساتھ رابطہ کریں۔

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