

# Spoon or Cup Feeding an Infant

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Spoon/cup feeding provides a safe alternative method to bottles and teats when your baby is unable to breastfeed effectively or requires additional fluids.

It can also be used if you are temporarily separated or unable to breastfeed your baby.

When medically indicated, expressed breastmilk is the first choice, or at your request a breastmilk substitute (formula) may be given.

Spoon size will be determined by your midwife.

The cup used should be small, soft-sprouted and smooth-edged e.g. small medicine cup washed well and dried

## How to spoon/cup feed

- Wash your hands
- Ensure your baby is awake and alert prior to starting a spoon/cup feed
- Half fill the clean and dry spoon/cup with expressed breastmilk/breastmilk substitute
- Wrap your baby securely to prevent his/her hands from knocking the spoon/cup
- Place a bib under your baby's chin as your baby may dribble some of the milk
- Hold your baby in a sitting position supporting his/her shoulders and neck so that you are both comfortable
- Keep your baby in an upright position throughout the feed
- Tilt the spoon/cup so the rim is gently resting on your baby's lower lip
- Allow your baby to begin with small sips. Do not pour milk into your baby's mouth
- Your baby will open his/her mouth and begin to sip or lap up the milk with his/her tongue. You will hear swallowing
- Leave the spoon/cup in place while your baby is feeding actively
- Your baby will regulate the pace and volume of the feed
- Remove the spoon/cup when your baby stops drinking
- Return the spoon/cup when your baby is showing signs of being ready to feed again
- Repeat this process until the feed is finished, usually within 20-30 minutes
- Following the feed, wash your hands and the spoon/cup in hot soapy water. Rinse and dry. The spoon/cup can be stored in a clean container (with a lid) in the fridge for later use



## References

1. [Australian Breastfeeding Association, Cup-feeding](#), April 2023
2. Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council Department of Health and ageing. [Eat for Health. Infant Feeding Guidelines Summary](#). NHMRC: Commonwealth of Australia 2013

Endorsed March 2023, Reviewed by consumers in development stage. Should you wish to discuss any aspect of this information please send an email [RHWfeedback@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:RHWfeedback@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au)