

### What type of supplementary formula will be used?

Standard infant formula based on cows milk is used for full-term babies.

Pre-term babies and those with special feeding needs may be given special formulas.

Please let staff know if there is a strong history of cows milk allergy in either parent or siblings. In this situation a low allergy formula may be used.

### Does my breastfed baby need extra water?

Breastfed babies do not require extra water, even in hot weather. In hot weather, offer extra breastfeeds to keep your baby well hydrated. Your baby may demand extra feeds when thirsty.

### How are supplementary feeds given to my baby?

While breastfeeding is being established it is recommended to avoid the use of bottles and teats. This is because the way a baby sucks on a bottle and teat is different from the way a baby sucks on the breast. Sometimes a baby may learn to prefer the teat and then have difficulty feeding from the breast.

Supplementary feeds can be given by cup, spoon, syringe, 'finger feeding' or tube feeding. The method chosen will depend on your baby's medical needs, your baby's age and the volume of the feed. Staff will advise you about the different options for your baby.

Sometimes a supplementary feed has to be given by a bottle and teat. Staff can support you to maintain breastfeeding during this time.

It is also your choice if you prefer to give supplementary feeds by bottle and teat.

### Useful contacts:

#### The Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) 24 hour helpline

Ph. 1800 686 268  
www.breastfeeding.asn.au

#### Ballarat Health Service Breastfeeding Clinic

Ph. 53204977 / 53204533

#### Parent Place Breastfeeding Support

Cnr Sturt and Albert Streets, Ballarat Central  
Ph. 53204977 / 53206871  
or drop in Thursdays 1330-1530

#### Ballarat Health Service Maternity Unit

Ph. 53204971

#### 24 Hour Maternal and Child Health Advice Line Ph. 132229.

## Supplementary feeds for breastfeeding babies

Does my baby need extra milk feeds?



### Notes

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## What are supplementary feeds?

Supplementary feeds are extra milk feeds given to a breastfed baby for medical reasons. If your baby needs supplementary feeds, your expressed breastmilk (EBM) is the first choice. If there is not enough EBM available, supplementary formula feeds may be needed. Once your breastmilk supply increases, your EBM will be used instead of formula, if supplementary feeds are still needed.

Routine, supplementary formula feeds are not recommended for full - term, healthy breastfed babies.

## Why offer supplementary feeds?

### **Possible Medical Reasons**

- The baby is unwell, such as showing signs of dehydration. (e.g. dry lips and tongue)
- The mother is unwell and/or unable to provide enough breastmilk.
- The baby has lost more than 10% of birth weight or is not gaining enough weight.
- The baby has jaundice needing phototherapy.
- The baby has low blood sugars.
- The baby was born pre-term.
- Other medical reasons where extra milk feeds are prescribed.

### **Mothers Choice**

Sometimes a mother may feel that she does not have enough breastmilk and will choose to offer her baby supplementary formula feeds.

Staff respect the right of parents to make this choice but it is important to talk with a midwife or nurse first so we can offer you support and extra help with breastfeeding.

## What are the possible effects of supplementary formula feeds?

- Breastfeeding works on a supply and demand basis. The more breastmilk your baby takes, the more breastmilk your breasts will make. When your baby is given supplementary formula feeds, your breasts may have less stimulation, so less breastmilk may be produced.
- It is important that your breasts are suckled frequently. If breastfeeds are missed, shortened or replaced by supplementary formula feeds, your breasts can become too full and painful. This is known as engorgement. Your breasts will make less breastmilk if they are too full.
- Supplementary formula feeds given to a newborn can interfere with the protection against infection that breastmilk is creating in the baby's gut. Around 1 to 3 percent of all babies given infant formula may develop an allergy to cows milk protein.

## Why do we ask you to sign a consent form for supplementary formula feeds?

Staff will only suggest supplementary formula feeds if there are medical reasons for extra milk feeds and there is not enough of your own breastmilk. It is important that parents are aware of these reasons. Because this is a medical treatment, we need written parental consent.

If you are choosing to offer supplementary formula feeds without a medical reason, we also ask you to sign a consent form. This is to make sure that you have been provided with the right information to make your decision.

## How can I minimise the possible effects of supplementary formula feeds on breastfeeding?

- If your baby is able to breastfeed, you are encouraged to continue to offer the breast whenever your baby is showing an interest in feeding.
- If your baby was born pre-term, you will be able to increase the amount of breastfeeding as your baby grows.
- Always offer a breastfeed before giving a supplementary formula feed.
- Supplement with your EBM where available to minimise the potential for cows milk protein allergy, and maintain the protective effects of breastmilk.
- Express your breasts frequently and regularly to build and maintain your breastmilk supply and prevent engorgement. This will help to reduce the amount of supplementary formula feeds that are required for your baby. Hospital staff will teach you how to express your breastmilk.
- Regular skin to skin contact with your baby promotes bonding and is also a great way to help establish breastfeeding and increase your breastmilk supply.