

What is a Nipple Shield?

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Qu'est-ce qu'un protège-mamelon (ou tétérelle)
(FF85-2186)



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What is a Nipple Shield?

A nipple shield is a soft silicone artificial nipple. It is placed over the nipple and areola (area around the nipple) while breastfeeding.

A health care provider may recommend using a nipple shield to help your baby latch for feeding.

Nipple shields come in different sizes. The size depends on the size of your nipples and your baby's mouth. A nipple shield should be fitted by a health care provider (such as a lactation (breastfeeding) consultant) who knows how to fit nipple shields.

Most latching problems go away over time. The goal is to have your baby breastfeeding without a shield as soon as possible.

Why do I need a nipple shield?

Your health care provider may recommend using a nipple shield:

- › to help your baby latch if you have flat or inverted nipples.
- › when your baby has continuing latching problems and the latch is not getting better.
- › if your baby was born preterm and has trouble keeping a deep latch.

- › if your baby was born with a neurological condition and they need help to latch better.
- › in some cases for sore or damaged nipples, **(only when recommended by a health care provider)**.

How do I take care of the nipple shield?

- Before using the nipple shield for the first time, boil it in water and follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- After each feeding, wash the shield in hot, soapy water and rinse with hot water.
- Boil the shield once each day for 2 minutes to sterilize (disinfect) it. Boiling may turn the shield a cloudy colour, but it is still safe to use.
- Replace the nipple shield if it becomes thin or worn. Check it each day for any tears.
- Store the nipple shield in a clean, dry container.

How do I use a nipple shield?

- Wash your hands before each breastfeeding.
- Gently massage your breast and hand express until milk starts to flow.
- Wet the back of the shield with breast milk or warm water to help it stay in place better.

- Turn the shield almost inside out, so the rim of the shield looks like the brim of a hat.
- Centre the tip of the shield over your nipple, then slowly roll the edges down over your areola.
- The nipple should be drawn into the tip of the shield. Hand expressing milk into the shield may help your baby start nursing.
- Gently touch the tip of the shield along your baby's upper lip from one corner to the other until your baby's mouth opens wide, like a yawn. Then latch your baby deeply onto the shield so that the baby's bottom lip is partially covering the areola. It may take a few tries before your baby latches on and starts nursing.
- Your baby should be latched deeply onto your breast. You should **not** be able to see your nipple under the shield at all while breastfeeding. It should not hurt or pinch when your baby sucks.
- Let your baby breastfeed as long as they want to. Make sure you can see jaw movement and hear swallowing during feeding. When your baby has finished the first side, repeat the steps on your other breast.
- You should see breast milk in the tip of the shield after every feeding.

Things to remember

- **To improve your milk supply, pump at least 4 to 6 times after feedings, until your milk supply is well established.** Then wean (slowly stop over time) from pumping as you are able.
- It is important to check your baby's wet and dirty diapers to make sure that they are drinking enough milk. By day 5, they should have 6 or more heavy, wet diapers and 2 to 3 or more yellowish-coloured soft stools (poops) each day.
- Your baby will need to be closely monitored by your health care provider to make sure they are gaining enough weight.
- You may have a lower milk supply when using a nipple shield. Start or increase breast pumping after each breastfeeding if you notice a lower milk supply. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk with your health care provider.
- **Remember, it is important to try to wean your baby from using the nipple shield as soon as possible.**

Questions?

Baby Clinic

Phone: 902-752-7600 ext. 2530

Public Health

Phone: 902-752-5151

**What are your questions?
Please ask. We are here to help you.**

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.