

- You will need to express after most feeds. Don't skip this. Express at least 8 times in 24 hours including during the night. You need to keep your supply well stimulated in the early weeks after the birth.
- Before you go home and once you are at home the plan needs to be revised with your midwife / home care nurse or Lactation Consultant.

Cleaning the Nipple Shield

- Generally there is no need to sterilise the nipple shield after each use. Inspect the nipple shield before each use and replace if damaged or worn out. Ensure holes are not blocked.
- Rinse it in cold water after use, then wash in warm soapy water, rinse again. Drain, dry and store in a clean, covered container with mother's or baby's identification label. Keep the container clean too.
- If you have thrush on the breast or are giving formula through a tube under the nipple shield, you will need to use a sterilizing solution or boil the shield – ask your midwife/nurse about this.

Withdrawing from the nipple shield

- This depends on why you need the shield. You may need a shield for a few feeds, days, weeks, or months. Don't be in a hurry to stop using the shield.
- Your baby should be feeding effectively without further weight loss, appear satisfied after feeds, have at least 6-8 wet nappies in every 24 hour period once your milk has come in, and have normal breastfed baby bowel motions.
- Your breast should feel softer and well drained after the feed. You should be able to hear your baby swallowing frequently during the feed. (Ask your midwife/nurse if you need further explanation).

- If you have been using the nipple shield for flat or inverted nipples, start feeding with the shield on, then several minutes after the baby has settled into a good suckling pattern and is feeding well, try removing it. Gently remove the baby from the breast, then holding the baby in the same breastfeeding position, remove the nipple shield and gently latch the baby on to your bare breast.
- If your baby doesn't latch on to the breast without the nipple shield, apply the shield again and try without the shield at another feed. Try at times when you and your baby are relaxed and when there is someone there to help you with other children or distractions, You may decide that you don't want to try removing it at every feed.
- Pre-term infants may need the nipple shield longer.
- NEVER cut the end off the shield.

Maintaining your milk supply

As long as the shield is the right size, your baby is latched well and you follow baby's feeding cues, you should not have any problems with breastmilk supply but you will need to express in the beginning. If your breastmilk supply decreases you may need to express at a later stage - talk to your midwife/nurse, La Leche League Breastfeeding Counsellor or Lactation Consultant.

A list of Breastfeeding Support in the Community is available.



Nipple Shields



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Nipple Shields

What are Nipple Shields?

Thin silicone covers that can be placed over the breast to help you with breastfeeding difficulties.

When to use:

- inverted nipples where baby keeps slipping off the breast or is not “transferring” milk
- some premature babies who latch well but keep slipping off, or falling asleep before finishing a full feed
- some other reasons, usually on the advice of a Lactation Consultant
- preferably after your milk is “in” and flowing well but there may be some exceptions

When Not to Use

The aim of using a nipple shield is to assist a baby to transfer milk. **Do not use a nipple shield to cover up nipple damage caused by incorrect positioning or latching.**

If you are not sure how to hold your baby and latch him/her to the breast without pain or nipple damage, ask your midwife/nurse for assistance.

How to choose the correct shield

We have written guidelines for staff to help you choose the right size - ask your midwife/nurse to explain this to you.

Choose the right size for the baby’s palate length first. It is important that the teat of the shield reaches well back in your baby’s mouth (ask your midwife/nurse to explain further)

Your nipple should not feel tight in the shield.

You can purchase shields from most pharmacies and stores which sell breastfeeding related products. If our staff provided a nipple shield, you may take it home with you.

How to Apply the Shield

- Wash and dry your hands well
- Dip the shield in warm boiled water
- Before applying - if using a shield with a cut-out at the top - decide where your baby’s nose will be when feeding at the breast
- Hand express a few drops of milk.
- With clean hands, smear breastmilk on the outside of the nipple shield teat so your baby will smell and taste your milk
- Express milk into the teat of the shield so the dry shield doesn’t rub on your nipple
- Turn the shield’s brim back on itself and with your fingers holding the brim, stretch the part of the shield where the teat joins the brim
- Place the stretched shield over your nipple, and release the tension after the shield has made contact around the base of your nipple. This should draw your nipple into the teat a little and help the shield to stay in place. Smooth the brim on to your breast.



How to Use the Shield

- If fitted correctly, it will not be necessary to hold the shield in place, but you may wish to place your fingers at the edge of the shield.
- Keep your fingers well away from the nipple area.
- Start with the teat of the shield resting above your baby’s top lip.
- Touch your baby’s lips with the nipple shield or the lower part of your breast.
- Your baby must open his/her mouth very wide so that you can bring your baby on to the breast.
- When latched, your baby’s lips must reach on to the brim of the shield. **If you can see the teat of the shield, your baby is not latched correctly.**
- It is important that the baby does not slip back on to the teat of the shield as this may cause pinching and nipple trauma. Your baby may also get less milk.
- Make sure the baby is sucking AND swallowing. “Milk transfer” means the milk is getting into the baby.
- **In hospital, you will need to express to keep your milk supply up** while you are using the nipple shield.
- Make a feeding plan with your LMC or midwife
- Record **all** wet nappies and the number and colour of stools - on the feed chart.

Expressing your milk

- Ask your midwife/nurse to teach you how to hand express. Further information is available.
- Ask her how to use an electric breastpump.