



Your Breastfeeding Journey: Nipple Shields

Sometimes mothers may need help when breastfeeding. There are many breastfeeding aids designed to help mothers through various challenges.

What is a Nipple Shield?

A nipple shield is a thin piece of silicone or rubber that is placed over the nipple and areola during breastfeeding.

Nipple shields can be helpful with:

- Inverted nipples
- Sore or cracked nipples
- Difficulty with latching
- Babies with tongue ties or other oral issues
- Premature or low birth weight babies who may have trouble breastfeeding



How Do you Use a Nipple Shield?

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before handling the nipple shield.
2. Choose the right size nipple shield for your breast. Nipple shields come in different sizes, so it's important to find the right size to ensure proper suction and milk flow.
3. Always attempt latching without a shield.
4. Turn shield halfway inside out and center over nipple.
5. Slowly roll the shield over the nipple and areola and smooth down edges. When using a "Contact Nipple Shield," the cut out portion is positioned under the newborn's nose.
6. Support the breast with a "C" hold. Place thumb at the top of the breast on the upper edge of the shield with fingers below.
7. Newborn should latch onto the breast and shield, taking part of the areola in their mouth. Be sure that the newborn is not suckling on the shield only.
8. Clean the shield thoroughly after each use.

Helpful Tips:

- Moisten edge of the nipple shield with water or lanolin before applying to help stay in place.
- Tickle newborn's upper lip with the tip of the shield until they open their mouth wide. Quickly pull newborn onto the nipple shield so they take as much nipple as possible into the mouth.
- If using for latch difficulties, try removing shield after a minute or two of breastfeeding and have your newborn latch without the nipple shield. Continue to do this with each feeding until your newborn latches without it.
- After breastfeeding with a nipple shield it is recommended that you pump to help maximize milk removal and protect your milk supply. You should do this until your milk supply is fully established and newborn is gaining weight.
- Be sure to purchase the correct shape and size shield for you and your baby. You can choose from a regular "Nipple Shield" that is a full circle and a "Contact Nipple Shield" with a cut out for the newborn's nose.

Remember...

Nipple shields are intended to be used as a temporary solution for latching challenges. With the help of your lactation consultant and the nipple shield, the goal is for your baby to be latching independently and you to be pain free within a few weeks.

**We Are Here For You,
Every Step of the Way**

Breastfeeding & Lactation Medicine

(585) 276-MILK

www.urmc.edu/breastfeeding

