

Infant feeding and relationships: Responsive Bottle feeding

Feeding Cues

Developed by Women's and Newborn Services
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

Early Cues - "I'm hungry"



Stirring



Mouth opening



Turning head
Seeking/rooting

Mid Cues - "I'm really hungry"



Stretching



Increasing physical
movement



Hand to mouth

Late Cues - "Calm me, then feed me"



Crying



Agitated body
movements



Colour turning red

Responsive bottle feeding: the mother-baby relationship will be helped if mothers are supported to tune in to feeding cues and to hold their babies close during feeds.

It is best if just you and your partner feed baby in the early weeks to help her feel safe and secure, get used to your way of feeding and enable you to form a close loving bond

Tips for responsive bottle feeding

- ▶ Keep baby close to you so that you can recognise feeding cues.
- ▶ Hold baby close to you, in a slightly upright position.
- ▶ Look into baby's eyes and talk gently to her.
- ▶ Gently rub the teat above baby's top lip to encourage her to open her mouth and poke her tongue out.
- ▶ Place the teat into front of baby's mouth to allow her to draw it further in.
- ▶ Allow just enough milk to cover teat and pace the feed as your baby may want to slow down, pause, or stop.
- ▶ Offer breaks, removing the teat and holding baby upright to wind.
- ▶ Never force baby to take a whole feed as she will know when she has had enough.
- ▶ If baby is upset, try to soothe her before you offer a feed. Skin to skin contact is great for calming babies at any time and at any age.
- ▶ Discard any leftover milk.