

Are PACIFIERS a PROBLEM?

It is recommended that babies are not given a pacifier until they are at least one month of age.

Pacifiers may cause breastfeeding problems

In a study published in The Lancet medical journal, it was found that babies who used a pacifier before two weeks of age had ineffective sucking skills when at the breast. These infants were more likely to have breastfeeding problems. They also found a shorter duration of breastfeeding in the group who used pacifiers. When the baby satisfies their need to suck from the pacifier and not the breast, the mother's milk supply may be decreased. This is especially true in the early days of life when stimulation of the breasts is most important.

Cholecystokinin

Cholecystokinin is a hormone that is released in the baby's gut when they suck. This release comes in two waves: the first, about 10 minutes into the feeding, is thought to be initiated by sucking and the second, about 30 minutes into the feeding, is stimulated by the presence of milk fat in the gut. Cholecystokinin causes the baby to feel full and makes the baby sleepy. This response happens when the infant is feeding at the breast and can happen while sucking on a pacifier. Your baby can settle and fall asleep while sucking on a pacifier and miss feedings. Parents should be careful about the over-use of pacifiers resulting in missed feedings and failure to gain weight.

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

The use of a pacifier has been associated with a reduction in the incidence of SIDS and the American Academy of Pediatrics has recommended the use of a pacifier while going to sleep. In order to minimize the negative effect on breastfeeding, it is recommended not to use a pacifier until your baby is at least one month old. The risk of SIDS is highest in the second and third months of life. At that point, the use of a pacifier while going to sleep is recommended. When the infant is asleep and the pacifier falls from their mouth, it does not need to be replaced