



### **IMPORTANT**

· The nipple shield is not recommended for use before your milk comes in.

· Always check with a health care professional before using the nipple shield.

· Maintain contact with a health care professional during the time you are using the nipple shield.

# **Breastfeeding**

## **Using a Nipple Shield**

### **What is a nipple shield?**

- A soft silicone artificial nipple that is placed over the mother's nipple and areola during a feeding

### **When is it used?**

- It may be used when the baby has continuing problems latching to the breast and the situation is not improving.
- Possible reasons to try a nipple shield include a baby who is demonstrating tongue thrusting, a retracted tongue, a weak suck, if the mother has inverted or flat nipples and the baby is unable to develop a latch, or when the baby is premature.
- The nipple shield provides a firm feeling inside the baby's mouth, thus stimulating the area that triggers effective sucking.

### **Care of the shield:**

- Wash in hot, soapy water (mild liquid hand soap) and rinse with hot water before the first use and after each feeding.
- Boil once daily in water for 5 minutes or according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Store in a clean container, facing upwards.

### **Applying a nipple shield:**

- Rinse the shield in hot water before nursing or express a small amount of breast milk into it, as this moisture helps the shield stay on the breast.
- Flip up the brim of the shield and turn half of the teat of the shield in on itself. Center the shield over the nipple. Direct your nipple into the shield and gently pat down the brim.

### **Remember:**

- Ensure the shield is a good fit for mother and baby as different sizes and lengths are available.
- Make sure the baby is well latched to the shield. Your nipple should be drawn into the shield.
- Use breast compression while breastfeeding to help increase milk intake at the breast.
- Count baby's wet and dirty diapers. When your milk is

flowing well, your baby should have at least 6 wet and 2 or more dirty diapers per day.

- Your milk supply may decrease if you use a shield. It is recommended, therefore, to express both breasts after every feed.
- Your baby should be weighed regularly by a health care professional to ensure he/she is gaining well while you are using a shield.
- If there are any concerns with your milk supply and/or your baby's weight gain, discuss this with your health care provider. Your baby may require supplementation if not gaining well.

**Weaning from the nipple shield:**

- The length of time a baby needs to use a shield will vary.
- Premature babies typically feed better with the nipple shield until they reach their due date.
- Keep trying to offer the bare breast on a regular basis.
- Try removing the shield after the baby has been nursing well for several minutes.
- Consult your health care professional for other tips to wean your baby from a nipple shield.