

Nutrition On Your Own



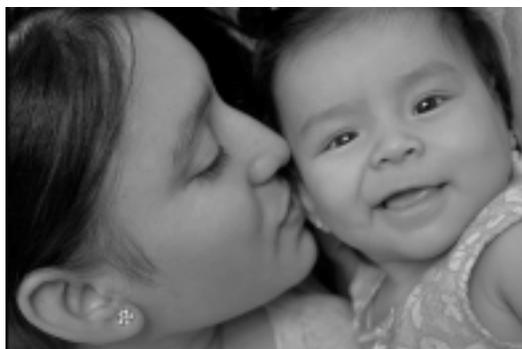
Weaning Your Baby from the Breast

Your breast is a special place of love, comfort, and security.

Think of a place you like to visit often, or think of a special activity you love to do. Write the activity or the place below:

Your baby sees your breast as a special place of love and security. It is more than a source of food.

When you begin to wean your baby, wean gradually. Give your baby lots of extra cuddles, kisses, and loving attention during this time of change.



Take your time.

You need time as well. Weaning is a change for *your* body, too. Your body will adjust better if weaning is done slowly.

Sometimes, abrupt weaning is necessary if surgery or other medical or unexpected circumstances arise. But gradual weaning is best for both you and your child.

Are you having a problem breastfeeding?

A breastfeeding counselor may be able to help you solve the problem.

Put a check mark by each topic below that describes your reasons for wanting to wean. Then talk to a WIC breastfeeding counselor. She will help you make *sure* that you will be happy with your decision.

- Are you returning to work or school? A counselor can advise you about pumping and storing your milk. Perhaps you could partially wean and continue to give both breastmilk and infant formula to your baby.
- Is your baby teething? Or going through a “growth spurt” (nursing all the time) or a “nursing strike” (not wanting to nurse)? A counselor can advise you.
- Are friends and family afraid your breastfeeding is “spoiling” your baby? A counselor can give you information to share with them. You can tell them how good it is for your baby if you breastfeed for a year or more.
- Do you need surgery or have to start medications that require abrupt weaning of your baby? A counselor can tell you how to pump and discard your milk temporarily. Then you can continue nursing after your surgery or when you are through taking your medications.
- Are you tired of breastfeeding and feel it is time to stop now? A WIC counselor can advise you on how to reduce your milk supply and adjust your baby to the weaning process.

You were given a brochure, *Weaning Your Baby from the Breast*, with this lesson. You will find additional information in this brochure. If you have more questions, discuss them with a WIC breastfeeding counselor.

Choose one of these three ways to wean your baby.

Here are three ways to wean your baby. Which one is the best way for you and your baby? Find it. Cut out the box it's in.

Put this piece of paper in a place where you will see it often. You can tape it to your mirror. Or, you can put it on the door of your fridge.

1.

Partial weaning

Are you returning to work or school? Do you want to continue giving your baby the health benefits of your breastmilk? Try this:

- ♥ Nurse your baby when you are with him — evenings and weekends.
- ♥ Pump your milk. Your baby's child-care provider can feed your bottled breastmilk to your baby while you are at work or school.
- ♥ Or, you can breastfeed when you are together and give your baby formula while you are away. You will produce less milk, but this is healthier for your baby than no breastmilk at all.



2.

Complete weaning

If you want to stop breastfeeding completely, gradually is best.

- ♥ Replace one feeding with a bottle or a cup of formula. This gives your body time to make a little less milk. After two or three days, replace another feeding with formula.
- ♥ Or, you can nurse just long enough to relieve the fullness in your breasts. Then, switch to formula.
- ♥ Let someone else give your baby your expressed milk or formula from a bottle. Your baby may not want to take a bottle from you.
- ♥ It might be hard at first for your baby to digest formula. Ask a WIC nutritionist to advise you about the formula your baby will need.
- ♥ Replace nursing times with other things that will replace the breast: a favorite toy, a security blanket, a book, or play time.



3.

Weaning your toddler from the breast

You can wait until your baby is older. You can wean him when he becomes a toddler.



- ♥ Give your toddler extra love and attention while you are weaning.
- ♥ Avoid being in the special place in your home where you usually nurse.
- ♥ Ask someone else to put your toddler down to sleep for naps and at nighttime.
- ♥ Distract your toddler with a game or activity when he asks to nurse.
- ♥ Postpone nursing. Instead, give your toddler a cup of water, juice, or milk.

Look at the *Breastfeeding Benefits Chart*, which is included with this lesson. Find the column that shows how long you have nursed. Give yourself a pat on the back. You have given your baby the healthiest start — breastfeeding.

What did you learn about weaning?

1. When I begin to wean my baby, I should wean _____
and with _____.
2. Weaning gradually is better for my baby and also helps _____
_____ adjust better.
3. A WIC counselor can help me learn how to reduce my _____
_____.
4. Name three things you can do to help your baby wean from the breast.
(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
5. Name two things to help your body adjust to weaning.
(1) _____
(2) _____

(4) Avoid being in the place you usually nurse.
(5) Postpone nursing; instead, give water, juice, or milk.
(6) Distract your child with games or toys.
5. (1) Nurse less frequently.
(2) Express milk when your breasts feel full.
(3) Wean gradually.

Answers:
1. gradually (or slowly) and lots of extra love
2. my body
3. milk supply
4. (1) Replace a nursing time with a favorite toy, book, or play time.
(2) Replace one feeding with a bottle or cup of formula.
(3) Give your baby lots of hugs and kisses.