



Using the Supplemental Nursing System (SNS) at the Breast

The Supplemental Nursing System (SNS) is a device mothers can use to help them feed their babies and increase milk production. A lactation consultant or health care provider may recommend the SNS if your baby isn't getting enough milk by breastfeeding alone. With the SNS, the baby gets milk from the breast and from a small tube filled with breast milk or formula at the same time. The SNS has many benefits:

- The baby's sucking helps stimulate the breast to produce more milk.
- The baby is feeding at the breast, rather than learning to use a bottle.
- A sleepy baby often suckles more easily with a faster flow at the breast.
- The baby gets the milk he or she needs, making breastfeeding less frustrating for both of you.

Step-by-step directions

1. Fill the SNS container with the correct amount of expressed breast milk or formula. Place the lid on the bottle and gently tighten it.
2. Close the tube by using the yellow clip. This prevents dripping. Slide the soft tube into the groove on the yellow clip.
3. Turn the SNS upside down and prime the reservoir by squeezing the bulb gently one time. This opens the valve and starts the milk flowing once the tube is opened.
4. Clip the Starter SNS bottle onto your clothing at breast level on the side opposite from the breast you will be using to nurse.
5. Tape the tube to the breast using paper tape. Tip: Place the soft silicone tube onto a 3 inch long piece of tape. Lay the tube along the tape so that only ¼ inch of the tube will extend beyond the end of the tape.
6. Using the tape, lay the tube along your breast with the end of the SNS tube at the tip of your nipple. Pinch the tape around the tube to prevent milk from leaking under the tape. A small amount of tape will be under the baby's lip and that's OK. If too much of the tube sticks out from under the tape it will be harder to latch the baby to the breast and the tube together. The baby should not use the tube as a "straw."
7. Support your arm and baby with pillows. Hold your baby up at breast height.
8. Open the tube by lifting the tube out of the groove on the yellow clip to allow the milk to flow down the tube.

9. Gently tickle the baby's top lip with your nipple until he opens wide like a yawn. When his mouth is open wide, quickly bring your baby to the breast. If the baby takes only the nipple or only the tube in his mouth, remove the baby and try again. (It's okay if it takes several tries to get it right while you are learning.)

If the baby has latched on correctly, you will notice little bubbles flowing up into the milk bottle whenever your baby sucks and swallows. If your baby is suckling but not swallowing or if you notice that no milk is being removed from the SNS, remove baby from the breast and re-latch for better tube placement.

Standard SNS



Starter SNS



Online resources

Visit kp.org/mydoctor to:

- View most lab results and check your preventive health reminders
- Email your doctor
- Use interactive online tools to help keep you and your family healthy

This information is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor.