

WEANING BABY

Weaning is a natural event in baby's overall development. When to wean is an individual decision based on you and baby's needs. Gradual weaning is the most comfortable way to make the emotional and physical adjustments for you and baby. "Cold turkey" weaning can be painful to the mom, cause breast cell damage and may bring about feelings of sadness/guilt due to a sudden drop of the hormone prolactin. Before weaning, engorgement must be addressed.

TO RELIEVE ENGORGEMENT:

- ▶ Use a breast pump or manually express breast milk, just enough to relieve fullness.
- ▶ Wear a supportive, comfortable bra.
- ▶ Place cold, crumpled, green cabbage leaves in the bra between pumpings/feedings.
- ▶ Take over-the-counter medications for pain.
- ▶ Report signs of plugged ducts (lumps, redness, tenderness) or breast infection (flu symptoms, fever >100.1, chills, red/hot/tender breasts and/or unusual fatigue).

THE WEANING TECHNIQUE

- ▶ Replace one feeding at a time with a bottle or cup depending on baby's age/ability.
Replace the feeding in which baby is least interested.
- ▶ Give baby only breast milk or formula until he is 1 year old and whole milk after his first birthday.
- ▶ Replace one breastfeeding every three to seven days or as slowly as time allows.
- ▶ When down to one daily feeding, continue for several days, then nurse every other day until baby is completely weaned.
- ▶ Follow the tips above to relieve breast fullness during and after weaning.
- ▶ Increase cuddling time with baby. Separation from the breast does not mean separation from mom.
If baby wants to nurse while cuddling, use distraction techniques, such as a favorite toy or noise maker.
- ▶ Wean baby slowly, but only when you are ready.

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