



Cup Feeding the Infant with Cleft Lip and/or Palate

Reasons for Cup Feeding

1. Preference of Surgeon
2. Lack of ability to suck with cleft palate
3. Sucking nipple (bottle or pacifier) will damage suture line of lip after surgery.
4. Sucking will damage suture line of palatoplasty

Reasons to Cup Feed Only

1. Bilateral cleft patient will have 3 to 4 surgeries in the first year of life.
2. Breast-feeding must be discontinued for at least 3 weeks after surgery, causing possible breast engorgement for mother and decrease in milk supply.
3. Child must be cup feeding before palate repair.
4. Changing from bottle to cup can be upsetting for mother and baby.

Providing A Nurturing Experience with Cup Feeding

1. Encourage attachment to object other than nipple.
2. Give infant soft toy or blanket to hold during feeding time.
3. Hold infant close to breast.
4. Select a comfortable position for feeding.
5. Speak softly to infant during feeding times.
6. Allow ample time and provide a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere during feeding time.