

Weaning From Breast Feeding

When your baby has stopped breast feeding and gets all of his nutrition from other sources than the breast, he's actually considered weaned. Even though babies are also weaned from the bottle as well, the term weaning often refers to when a baby is stopped from breast feeding.

When weaning is a mother's idea, it normally requires a lot of patience and can take time, depending on the age of your baby or toddler, and also how well your child adjusts. The overall experience is different for everyone.

Weaning is a long goodbye, sometimes emotional and sometimes painful. It doesn't however, signal fo the end to the intimacy you and your child have developed during the nursing stage. What it means, is that you have to replace breast feeding with other types of nourishment.

Starting weaning

Your the best judge as to when it's the right time to wean, and you don't really have a deadline unless you and your child are actually ready to wean. The recommended time for weaning is one year. No matter what relatives, friends, or even complete strangers tell you, there is no right or wrong time for weaning.

How to wean

You should proceed slowly, regardless of what the age of your child may be. Experts say that you shouldn't abruptly withhold your breast, as they results can be traumatic. You should however, try these methods instead:

1. Skip a feeding - Skip a feeding and see what happens, offering a cup of milk to your baby instead. As a substitue, you can use a bottle of your own pumped milk, formula, or a cow's milk. If you reduce feedings one at a time, your child will eventually adjust to the

changes.

2. Shorten feeding time - You can start by cutting the length of time your child is actually at the breast. If the normal feeding time is 5 minutes, try 3. Depending on the age, follow the feeding with a healthy snack. Bed time feedings are usually the hardest to wean, as they are normally the last to go.

3. Postpone and distract - You can postpone feedings if you are only feeding a couple of times per day. This method works great if you have an older child you can actually reason with. If your child wants the breast, say that you'll feed later then distract him.

If you've tried everything and weaning doesn't seem to be working at all, maybe the time just isn't right. You can wait just a bit longer to see what happens, as your child and you have to determine the right time to wean together.

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