

By the time children are a year old, they have the motor skills to sit up, hold a cup, and drink from it, so they no longer need a bottle or sippy cup, at least not for nutrition.



Your baby is ready to use a cup when:

- He/she can sit up with some support and has good head and neck control
- He/she shows interest in your cup and reaches for it
- He/she is at least 5 to 6 months of age.

Why change to a cup now and why skip sippy cups all together?

### 1. Speech concerns

- Much like the issues concerning prolonged bottle use, sippy cups have been linked to an increase in speech impediments and delays
- Regular and extended use can contribute to distortions of a growing soft palate, along with unnatural posture of tongue
- Bottles and sippy cups continue to exercise the anterior-posterior movement of the tongue; this slowly positions the child's tongue toward annunciation concerns



### 2. Tooth Decay



- Bottles and Sippy cups are designed to be mostly spill proof which leads parents and caregivers to be more likely to allow kids to drink milk and juice over longer period of time.
- Can increase the likelihood of children taking drinks to bed or to passively consume sugar while watching TV.
- Extended periods of time having liquids rest on growing teeth and gums increases the occurrence of tooth decay, especially taking bottles/cups to bed at night.

### 3. Anemia

- Children who use a bottle can develop anemia or low-iron blood.
- Children fill up on drinks from a bottle or sippy cup since it's always available, being able to walk around all day and night with it. Milk, juice, and other drinks are low in iron.
- Children need foods like meat, chicken, and beans to get the iron they need to grow. Anemia can make your child feel tired and weak



How to wean your child from a bottle

- Start teaching to use a cup around the age of 6 months. Try a small plastic cup or a 360 cup. 360 cups can still spill but it has a lid on and you use it just like a regular cup. Try one with handles.
- Help your child learn to take sips of water, breast milk, or formula from the cup. Try not to worry about spills
- When your child is around 9 months old, start using cups instead of bottles.
- If morning and bedtime bottles are hard to give up, start weaning the daytime bottles.
- Give your child healthy snack between meals instead of a bottle. Give water between meals.



## Bedtime

- Offer a cup with water before bed time. Don't let infant/child take a bottle or cup into bed with them. Bottles and cups in bed lead to tooth decay and other teeth/mouth issues
- Brush teeth before they go to sleep.
- Try other comforts in bed like a favorite blanket or toy, read a story, rub their back, or rock them for a while



- ❖ If it's not a meal or snack time, put only plain water in a cup
- ❖ Don't let your child walk around with a bottle/cup all day. Only have it available in the kitchen when they are thirsty
- ❖ Don't let infant/child take bottle/cup to bed with them. The liquid will sit in their mouth all night leading to tooth decay.
- ❖ Milk, juice, and sweet drinks are a leading cause of tooth decay. Offer them only at meal times.
  - 3 cups of milk / day
  - 1 cup of juice / day



# Cup Time!



You can help your child grow well, be healthy, and have strong teeth. Help your child change from the bottle to a cup!

## Keep your child's teeth healthy

- Ask your doctor about giving your child fluoride drops or going to your dentist or local public health office for a fluoride varnish. Fluoride helps protect teeth.
- Brush your child's teeth with a small, soft toothbrush with a tiny bit of fluoride toothpaste, twice / day
- Take your child to a dentist by the age of one – sooner if you think there might be a problem



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