



# Welcome Words for your 11 Month Old

## Breast or Bottle: What About Weaning?

Weaning can be a very slow process that involves cutting out one breast or bottle-feeding at a time for up to a year. At 11 and 12 months some babies may begin to self-wean. Most babies need less time sucking by this age, and they're also interested in being more active during feedings.

Unless your baby's health care provider advises you otherwise, give her formula or breast milk, rather than cow's milk, until she's a year old. Waiting until later to begin weaning changes the process of weaning. Many mothers, however, chose to wait until the 2nd or 3rd year -following the child's lead. Your child continues to receive immunities from the mother as long as breastfeeding.

### **Weaning from a Bottle**

If available on demand, a bottle may decrease her appetite for solids. Letting a baby fall asleep with a bottle increases the chance of both ear infections and tooth decay. Only put water in a bottle at bed or nap time.

If your baby is reluctant to move from a bottle to a cup, try to:

- Supplement bottle feedings with snacks and drinks from a cup.
- *Limit when and where your baby has her bottle. If she can have it only at the end of meals, she may give it up sooner.*

### **Weaning from the Breast**

Your baby may be letting you know that she's ready for weaning if she refuses to nurse; begins nursing eagerly, then stops, fusses and moves around a lot; or if she plays instead of nursing. If you're willing to let your baby self-wean, you'll need to be alert to cues from her. Don't offer the breast if she doesn't ask; don't refuse if she does. Many breastfed babies go right to using a cup, but some drink formula or expressed breast milk from a bottle, later switching to a cup.

### **Mom's Adjustment**



If weaning happens too quickly, you may have discomfort from engorged breasts. Cut back on fluids and express just enough milk to relieve the pressure; expressing too much will lead to further milk production. Hot compresses and aspirin, acetaminophen or ibuprofen may help with the discomfort. Fever and flu-like symptoms may mean you have mastitis, a breast infection or plugged ducts. Check with your health care provider if these symptoms persist longer than 24 hours.

As your body adjusts, shifting hormonal levels may cause mood swings, irritability and mild depression. Many mothers feel they're on an emotional roller coaster. If your symptoms are severe or last more than a few weeks, call your health care provider or Welcome Baby.

A new pregnancy does not necessitate weaning. If you have a history of pre-term labor certainly discuss with your health care provider if you should discontinue breast feeding. Otherwise, tandem nursing of a toddler and newborn is possible. Talk to others who have done this for more information.

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## Milestones

### **Between 11-12 months, you:**

- can get yourself into a sitting position from lying on your stomach
- Can pick up a tiny object with any part of your thumb and finger
- enjoy active games, especially being "chased" as you scoot or crawl
- may be standing alone briefly
- may say one word other than "Mama" or "Dada"
- may be able to drink from a cup

Excerpted from What to Expect the First Year (Workman, 1989) and You and Your Child (Ross Laboratories, 1987)

### **How to Wean**

Begin weaning when your baby is healthy and your lives are fairly settled. If she is sick or is teething, you've just moved or traveled, or she's changed caregivers, delay for a week .

Most parents begin by eliminating the feeding their baby seems least interested in. A lunch-time feeding is a good start. Offer a cup instead of the bottle or breast and reserve the bottle/breast for after meals. When you both feel ready, replace another breast or bottle feeding with the cup. Gradually, your baby will receive more and more of her nourishment from solids and a cup.

### **Letting Go**

If your baby is self-weaning, she'll set the pace. Some babies seem to want to continue one bottle or breast feeding a day. In this case, your choices are to let her decide when to stop, or to go "cold turkey." If you choose the latter, replace this feeding ritual with a new one, such as a goodnight story, or a morning snuggle and song.

If you're feeling reluctant to let go of breast or bottle-feeding, try to think of it as a beginning rather than an end. This is another in a series of many steps as your baby develops a healthy independence.

## FIRST STEPS, BIG STEPS

Whatever your baby is doing this month - whether it's pulling up and trying to stand with support, standing alone, or cruising along with support from chairs and her parents' legs - she's following the developmental steps that come before walking. Remember:

- All children learn at their own pace.
- Some babies don't pull themselves up to a standing position until after their first birthday, while others begin at 5 months. Most children fall somewhere in between. (Heavier babies may have more trouble with pulling up and standing since they have more weight to support.)
- It's important that you give your baby the freedom to develop according to her own timetable.
- Pushing a baby to walk before she's ready won't speed her progress and may slow it, especially if she develops a fear of falling. Of course, a baby who is cooped up in a stroller, or swing, for much of the day won't get the practice she needs to develop her leg muscles.
- Letting her pull up to stand in your lap will help her develop the muscles that she needs to stand independently.
- You can also give her opportunities to practice cruising in bare feet (which will help her balance) by setting up chairs for her to hold on to as she tries to reach a toy in the last chair.
- For some parents, their baby's mobility brings feelings of loss. The tiny infant who depended on you for every need may now seem entirely too independent.
- Yet, as you'll soon find out, toddlers require constant attention from parents and caregivers. Within seconds, a baby can move from safety to danger.
- If your baby shows no signs of interest in cruising or standing, she's probably focusing on other skills, such as language. However, if you feel there may be a problem with your child's development, it's a good idea to talk over your concerns with your baby's health care provider.

## USING A CUP

- Keep a drinking cup available at bottle-feeding for a separate time
- Start with an unbreakable cup it won't tip easily. Accept that there to come. Some babies like a cup prefer no handles.
- If the cup seems slippery, try wrapping a couple of strips of adhesive tape around it. A spouted lid may be helpful, but some babies seem to reject this—maybe it doesn't look enough like the cups their parents use.
- It's easiest to start with small amounts of water, though you might try half water and half apple juice. Put just a few sips worth in the cup at first. Hold the cup to her lips and pour a few drops in her mouth. Then take the cup away, giving her a chance to swallow without gagging.
- Make these sessions short. If she turns her head away or starts fussing, she's had enough. Some babies reject milk in a cup if they're accustomed to it from breast or bottle. Others prefer milk.
- If your baby wants to grab the cup and "do it herself," let her. Spills are part of the learning process.
- What if your baby rejects the cup, even after a few brief tries? Wait a few weeks before trying again.
- Try to create a little excitement: "Look, here's a new cup for you!" As before, proceed gradually, respecting your baby's wishes when she's had enough.



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## Suggested Reading

Touchpoints: The Essential Reference  
by T. Berry Brazelton, M.D.

Child Safety Is No Accident  
by Jay M. Arena and  
Miriam Bachar Settle

Siblings Without Rivalry  
by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

I Heard It Through the Playground:  
616 Best Tips from the Mommy &  
Daddy Network  
by Fram, Boswell & Maas, M.D.

The Nursing Mother's Guide  
to Weaning  
by Huggins and Zudrich

## The Challenge of little Brothers and Sisters

- Even the best of sibling relationships may change as your baby begins to crawl, creep, or cruise into her older brother's or sister's territory.
- Give your older child a time and place, such as a high table, to play with big-kid toys. If necessary, help your older child put these toys safely away when time's up.
- Help protect your older child's privacy and possessions. While it's important for him to learn to share, this will be easier if he knows you respect his ownership of belongings.
- Offer support and sympathy to siblings, but make clear that physical harm - hitting, pushing, pinching or biting - is not allowed, and will result in a consequence such as a time-out, or loss of a privilege (maybe a favorite TV show).
- If you see your older child hurting the baby, try to stay calm. Separate them and comfort the baby while you and the older child have a chance to cool down. Be clear that "hitting your sister is not allowed, even when you're very angry."
- Try to give each child some of your undivided attention every day, even if it's just 5 to 10 minutes.