

## **Finger Feeding with Supplemental/Transitional Nursing System**

### Description

Finger feeding involves an infant receiving breast milk or formula via a very fine tube while sucking on an adult finger.

### Indication for use of Finger Feeding Device

- a. To provide extra milk to an infant, when an infant is unable to latch.
- b. Suck training.

### Procedure

- a. Educate client about the purpose of finger feeding and the risks of poor milk intake and compromised milk production when finger feeding.
- b. Assess milk production and need for additional breast stimulation when using a specialty feeding device.
- c. Instruct the client to:
  - i. Wash hands. WIC staff should be gloved.
  - ii. Prepare equipment: Transitional feeder- draw up human milk or formula into syringe. Connect feeding tube to syringe.  
Supplemental Nursing System- Place human milk or formula into the container.
  - iii. Place feeding tube either along the side or pad of the finger. Use the finger closest to the size of the parent's nipple. The end of the feeding tube should meet the end of the finger. Tape may be used to secure tube placement.
  - iv. Position baby on caregiver's lap in a semi-upright position, with one of their hands supporting his/her shoulders and neck. Pillows for support of baby and caregiver's arms may be helpful.
  - v. Gently tickle baby's lower lip in the middle, in an up-and-down direction to elicit both the rooting and tongue extrusion reflexes. Keep tickling just as you would for breastfeeding, until baby opens as wide as he or she can.
  - vi. Gently insert finger with pad side up, against the hard palate near the upper gum line, when baby opens mouth wide.
  - vii. Move finger back to near the hard and soft palate juncture where the breast nipple would go if the baby were at the breast.
  - viii. Keep finger pad in gentle contact with the hard palate. Baby may gag if the finger drops down on baby's tongue.
  - ix. Watch for milk being drawn out of the device with each suck.
    - x. Allow infant to set the pace of his or her suck, swallow and breathe.
    - xi. Advance milk by gently pushing on the plunger or squeezing the container if the infant is not withdrawing milk as they suck or to offer a faster flow.

References:

Breastfeeding Education by IABLE. (2017, February 20). *Finger feeding to supplement Breastfeeding Infant*. [Video] YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRFgA\\_uHW1g&t=11s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRFgA_uHW1g&t=11s)

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