

Excerpts from The Infant Sleep Schedule - Chapter 3 Breast Or Bottle?

Out of all the topics on babies today, this one has to be the most controversial. It even ranks higher than co-sleeping, which most mothers have a strong opinion on. Yes, unfortunately, whether to breast-or-bottle-feed your very own baby, regardless of your feelings, is a subject that arouses presupposition and judgment of other mothers, friends, and members of the public. Opinions will flood in from grandparents, couples who have not yet had their own baby, teachers, even strangers who sit beside you in the park. The simple act of pulling a bottle out of your bag to feed your baby can indeed bring about uninvited criticism. The pressure upon mothers to immediately breastfeed, and then continue to breastfeed for at least six months, is overwhelming. Stymied as an image dilemma, breastfeeding pros are thought of as cranks, and formula-feeding supporters are categorized as uncaring mothers. Both are untrue. Breastfeeding does not make you a good mother. Nor does bottle-feeding make you a bad one. But sole breastfeeding has become a symbol of the iconic mother.

Many mothers believe taking their babies to their breast again and again will help them put on weight. This is incorrect. Weight gain is derived from sound sleep, regularity in feeding cycles, and quality of breast milk. Though the watery fore-milk will undeniably hydrate your baby to sufficiency, it will not benefit her in terms of physical growth. A prolonged feed is not a substitute for a full feed. A consistent feeding of hind-milk using the efficient suck, swallow, suck, swallow, technique may have your baby full in ten minutes. When feeding, you must listen to your baby as she feeds. A suck, suck, suck, swallow, type of feeding will take your baby three times as long as an efficient feeder.

Incorrect attachment often goes hand in hand with demand feeding. The constant pressure of taking a baby to the breast takes a toll on the body. Mothers who practice demand feeding can feed their baby up to twenty times a day. Each feed is incomplete and likely to be of poor quality milk, hence the baby being hungry again in twenty minutes.