

Cleft Care: Using the Pigeon cleft bottle

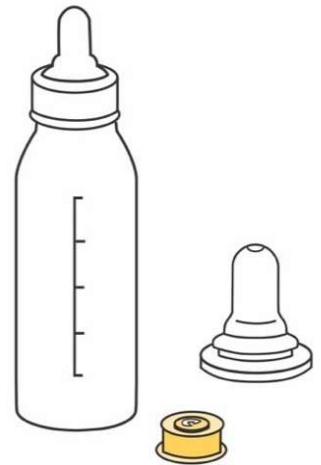
Every family's feeding journey is different. There is no single 'right' way to feed a baby with a cleft.

The Pigeon cleft bottle is designed to make feeding easier and safer, while supporting your baby's growth.

This handout will guide you through how to set up and use the Pigeon cleft bottle and share helpful tips to support feeding at home.

Key features and usage

- **One-way valve** - Milk only flows when your baby chomps down on the teat, giving them control over the volume and speed of the feed.
- **Specialist teat shape** - Teat is wider than a standard teat and has a flat ridge. This helps your baby press on the teat and stops it slipping into the cleft.
- **Silicone Y-cut teats** - Milk flows based on your baby's chomping rhythm. This supports baby-led feeding. Teats come in small and regular sizes.
- **Compression-based design** - The bottle can be gently squeezed to help milk flow.
- **Easy to access** - Bottles, valves, and teats can be purchased online at pigeonbaby.com.au/collections/special-needs-baby-feeding. Reach out to your cleft team for information about discount options.



How to set up the Pigeon bottle

Preparation - Carefully assemble the bottle before each feed. Place the valve inside the teat with the flat side of the valve facing the tip of the teat. Check the bottle before feeding to make sure everything is in place.



1 Insert the plastic valve into the nipple/teat.	2 Make sure the valve is fully secured, flush with the nipple/teat base.	3 Insert the nipple/teat into the nipple/teat collar.	4 Make sure the nipple/teat is fully sealed.	5 Place the nipple/teat collar tightly on the bottle.

Troubleshooting common problems

Teat flattens during feeds:

- adjust the bottle angle
- make sure the vent is pointing up towards your baby's nose
- check that the valve is in the correct position.

Too much air during feeds:

- keep the teat full of milk
- pause more often to burp.

Milk coming from their nose:

- try feeding your baby in a more upright position to help reduce milk entering their nose.



Cleaning and sterilising bottles

- Take the bottle completely apart after each use.
- Check the valve regularly for signs of wear or damage.
- Wash all parts with hot, soapy water.
- Rinse well and let everything air dry on a clean surface.
- Sterilise all parts once a day using a steam steriliser.

More information is available in our resource [Cleft Care: Cleaning feeding equipment](#).

Helpful feeding tips

- Burp your baby often during and after feeds.
- Keep track of feeding and weight gain. Steady growth is a good sign that feeding is going well.
- More information is available in our resource [Cleft Care: Feeding your baby](#).
- Your Child Health Nurse can help support you and answer questions along the way.

Cleft Care team contacts

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the cleft team for support.

Clinical nurse specialist

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