

**Consult your doctor to ensure that this information is right for your child. Information below is for general information and does not constitute medical advice.**

## **Spitting Up**

Almost all babies spit up, especially newborns. Spitting up decreases once the muscles of the esophagus, the muscular tube that connects the throat to the stomach, become more coordinated. This process can take as little as 6 months or as long as 1 year.

### **When spitting up becomes a problem**

If your baby starts spitting up after every feeding, there may be a problem with the way he or she is being fed. He or she may be swallowing too much air when sucking, or you may not be burping the baby enough during feedings. Fever will sometimes cause a baby to spit up. Milk (lactose) intolerance and food allergies also can cause increased spitting up. Other signs of these problems include loose, watery stools; irritability; and abdominal pain.

Spitting up should not be confused with vomiting. Vomiting is forceful and repeated. Spitting up may seem forceful but usually occurs shortly after feeding, is effortless, and causes no discomfort. A baby may spit up for no reason at all. Vomiting may be due to a more serious problem, such as pyloric stenosis or gastroesophageal reflux disease. If you think your baby is vomiting, contact your health professional.

### **Tips to reduce spitting up**

The following tips may help your baby to spit up less often. If this advice does not reduce the frequency of spitting up, contact your doctor.

- \* Feed your baby smaller amounts at each feeding.
- \* Feed your baby slowly.
- \* Hold your baby during feedings.
  - Don't prop your baby's bottle.
  - Don't hold your baby in an extreme upright position or place your baby in an infant seat during feedings.
- \* Try a new type of bottle or use a nipple with a smaller opening to reduce air intake.
- \* Limit active and rough play after feedings.
- \* Try putting your baby in different positions during and after feeding.
- \* Burp your baby frequently during feedings.
- \* Do not add cereal to formula without first consulting your health professional.
- \* Do not smoke when you are feeding your baby.
- \* If you think a food allergy may be the cause of spitting up, talk to your health professional about starting your baby on hypoallergenic formula.