WHEN LATCHING

Anne J. Barnes May 1995

Have nipple and baby’s nostrils in line before latching
Baby held around shoulders,
Head supported but NOT pushed in against breast
Head tilted back slightly,
Baby’s body and legs wrapped in around mother

Push with base of hand on baby’s back and shoulders when MOUTH WIDE OPEN to move baby quickly onto breast, so chin and lower jaw touch breast first.
WATCH LOWER LIP, aim it as far from base of the nipple as possible, so tongue draws LOTS OF BREAST in mouth.
Move baby’s body and head together- keep uncurled
Once latched, top lip will be close to nipple, areola shows above lip. Keep chin close against breast.

area drawn into baby mouth

WIDE MOUTH GAPE

Need MOUTH WIDE BEFORE baby moved onto breast
TEACH baby to open wide/gape
• move baby toward breast, touch top lip against nipple
• move mouth away SLIGHTLY
• touch top lip against nipple again, move away again
• REPEAT UNTIL BABY OPENS WIDE and has tongue forward
From “Bestfeeding: getting breastfeeding right for you”  
M Renfrew, C Fisher, S Arms
Mother view while latching

- baby’s head tilted slightly back
- bring baby in quickly
- push with base of hand on shoulders
- chin touches firts
- baby’s body close against mother

move baby, not breast

Mother view of nursing baby

- head tilted slightly back
- chin well in against breast
- hold in firmly against shoulders
- keeping baby uncurled

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MOTHER

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Mother's posture
sit with straight, well-supported back, trunk facing forwards, lap flat

Baby's position before feed begins
on pillow, nostril (not mouth) in line with nipple

Baby's body
placed not quite tummy to tummy, but so that baby comes up to breast from below and baby's upper eye makes eye contact with mother's

Support breast
and firm inner breast tissue by raising breast slightly with fingers placed flat on chest wall and thumb pointing up (if helpful, also use sling of tensor bandage around breast)

Entice baby to gape
baby's head and shoulders supported so head extends slightly as baby moved to breast

Move baby quickly on to breast
head tilted back slightly, pushing in across shoulders so chin and lower jaw make first contact (not nose) while mouth still wide open, keep baby uncurled (means tongue nearer breast)
lower lip is aimed as far from nipple as possible so baby's tongue draws in maximum amount of breast tissue

Cautions

Mother needs to avoid
- pushing her breast across her body
- chasing the baby with her breast
- flapping the breast up and down
- holding breast with scissor grip
- not supporting breast
- twisting her body towards the baby instead of slightly away
- aiming nipple to centre of baby's mouth
- pulling baby's chin down to open mouth
- flexing baby's head as is brought to breast
- moving breast into baby's mouth instead of bringing baby to breast
- moving baby onto breast without a proper gape
- not moving baby onto breast quickly enough at height of gape
- having baby's nose touch breast first and not the chin
- holding breast away from baby's nose