LEARNING HOW TO BREASTFEED

How to use a nipple shield

- A nipple shield is a thin plastic nipple that is placed on your breast to help your baby learn to breastfeed
- Preterm babies often have a weak or immature suck when they are learning to breastfeed
- The nipple shield will help your baby attach and stay on your breast
- The baby can make more suction with the shield, so they get more milk
- Your nurse, occupational therapist or lactation nurse will help to fit you and your baby with the right size shield
- To put the shield on; flip the outer part inside out, center the shield over your nipple and flip the outer part snugly onto your breast
- Some mothers like to use a small amount of your milk or lanolin under the outer part of the shield to help it stick (not on the nipple part!)
- Latch your baby on by stroking his lips with the shield tip
- When the baby opens wide, gently guide him onto the breast.
- The tip of the shield needs to be in the back of your baby’s mouth, it should not slide in and out while baby is sucking
- You should feel the baby’s suck with the shield on, and hear swallows
- Shields should be washed with warm soapy water after each use, dried and put into a clean container
- Most preemies use a nipple shield to breastfeed until a few weeks after their due date, when their suck is stronger
What is a Test Weight?

- When a baby is learning to breastfeed, it is hard to know how much milk they drink.
- We will show you how to weigh the baby before and after feeding.
- The amount of weight the baby gains is the amount of milk that was taken from your breast (1 gram = 1 ml of milk).
- It is important to not change clothes or diapers (between the weights) so that the numbers are accurate.
- Any wires or tubes should be weighed the same way before and after feeding.
- Write the “before” weight down on paper so that you remember.
- The baby’s nurse can help you learn to use the scale and calculate the weight gain.
- Thanks Mom for doing such a great job helping me learn how to breastfeed and pumping milk for me!