



ASK AN EXPERT: When can I add cereal to formula to help baby sleep?



A question many parents ask simply because they are tired! The truth is, unfortunately, adding food to the bottle WILL NOT make your baby sleep through the night.

I am concerned about this practice for a few reasons:

1 Cereal is not meant to go through the bottle, so many times, it ends up clogging the nipple, causing your baby to be very frustrated when feeding.

2 Babies have an immature digestive system, and prior to about 6 months, their little systems aren't meant to tolerate anything other than easily digested breastmilk or formula. Rushing it isn't a good practice.

3 Allergies/Celiac Disease. As many parents know, food allergies are increasing and parents typically will do ANYTHING to prevent it from happening. Some research indicates that early exposure to gluten-containing grains may increase the prevalence of Celiac Disease. Adding mixed grain cereal (includes gluten-containing barley) may increase that chance. Studies have shown exclusive breast feeding for at least six

months can decrease the risk of food allergies in children, though the evidence is not 100 percent supported.

Bottom line: Babies will sleep through the night when they are ready. Patience is important when it comes to feeding our kids. Pressure to eat, or offering food when they aren't ready for it, is a recipe for disaster.

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Owner/founder of FEED

Best Zzzzzzz tip

Following those dreamy night feedings, place your full-bellied, diapered and swaddled baby into the bassinet in a sleepy state and let her drift to sleep on her own.

Janeen Hayward,
Swellbeing



Having trouble navigating the ups and downs of Parenting?

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