

What if my baby brings back up some feed?

Information for Parents and Carers

This leaflet provides general information only. If you have any concerns regarding your baby contact your baby's doctor or nurse.

It is quite normal for babies to bring up (regurgitate / spill) a little milk after feeds. Most babies grow out of this as they get older. If your baby is otherwise well and gaining weight there is little cause for concern.

However some things to consider include:

Positioning

- Avoid positions that put pressure on your baby's tummy and aggravate the issue, especially after feeds. However always put your baby on their back to sleep according to 'Safe Sleep' guidelines (see www.isida.ie).
- Keeping your baby slightly elevated (i.e. keeping your baby's head above the level of their tummy) after feeds can sometimes help. For example, hold your baby slightly upright or if lying down, place something about 2cm thick under the legs at the top (head) end of the cot. Your baby's body should remain straight.

Avoid pressure on tummy

- Avoid situations that put pressure on your baby's tummy, especially after feeds.
- Avoid allowing your baby to 'slouch' after feeds, e.g. in a car seat or bouncer seat.
- Avoid handling your baby too much after feeds.
- Avoid tight-fitting clothes which can press on your baby's tummy.

Make sure feed volume is suitable

- Check that your baby is not given too much feed at one time.
- Smaller, more frequent feeds may help.

If your baby is unable to take the expected amount of milk let your baby's public health nurse or doctor know.

Avoid trapped wind

Sometimes trapped wind (air) can trigger your baby to bring back up some feed.

To help prevent this help your baby to avoid swallowing air while feeding and help ensure that your baby is able to clear their wind after feeds.

Some babies may be able to clear wind themselves but some babies may need help, e.g. hold your baby to your shoulder and gently rub their back.

Avoid sitting your baby forward to bring up wind as this may put extra pressure on their tummy.

Suggestions to help your baby avoid swallowing air while feeding

- **Feeding technique:** Ensure that your baby is in a good position during feeds and that they have a good seal around your nipple / the teat with their lips.

Bottle-fed babies— extra considerations:

- **Feed preparation:** Ensure that the feed is prepared correctly.
- **Bubbles:** Allow any air bubbles that might be in the milk after shaking to settle before feeding.
- **Teat and flow rate:** Ensure that the teat and flow rate suit your baby. There should be a steady flow of drips when the bottle is turned upside down. If the flow rate is too fast or too slow your baby may swallow air when feeding.
- Ensure that the teat and neck of the bottle are full of milk during feeds. It may help to remove the teat from your baby's mouth from time to time during feeds. This helps stop the teat collapsing and your baby swallowing air.
- There are different bottles and teats designed to help. Ask your public health nurse or pharmacist for advice.

Avoid smoke

Avoid exposure to tobacco smoke.

If your baby continues to bring up large amounts of milk, or is unwell or not thriving, contact your baby's doctor or nurse.