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Health Department

FACTS&details

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Sippy Cup Dos and Don'ts

Why is the transition from a bottle to a sippy cup to a regular cup important?

Sippy cups help children transition from a bottle to a cup. Children use mouth and tongue movements similar to sucking on a bottle when using a sippy cup. Drinking from a regular cup teaches your child the more complicated sip and swallow action which is important for speech development and dental health.

When should my child begin using a sippy cup?

When your baby is approximately 6 months old, he/she should begin using a sippy cup. Your child is ready to use a sippy cup when he/she starts to:

- Sit without support
- Hold objects easily in both hands
- Watch you drink from a cup
- Become curious about drinking from a cup

When should my child stop using a sippy cup?

Sippy cups are not meant to be used for an extended period of time. By age 3, a child should be drinking from a regular cup. Some children are ready to make the transition to a regular cup as early as 18 months. Observe your child and work with your doctor to determine when the time is right.

What liquids can I put in a sippy cup?

Except at mealtime, a sippy cup should be filled only with water. Keeping only water in the cup outside of mealtime helps prevent against the development of unhealthy habits. It also helps guard against tooth decay and speech problems. Most babies, especially when encouraged early on, will happily accept fresh, cold water.

During meals, you can also use milk or fruit juice. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends only 4-6 ounces of 100% fruit juice a day. NEVER fill sippy cups with soda pop or other sugary drinks.

Talk to your pediatrician, doctor or dentist for more information on sippy cups.