

Post-Operative Feeding Guidelines Following Lip Repair for Infants with Cleft Lip and Palate

How should I feed my infant after surgery?

Your infant can immediately return to whichever cleft-adapted feeding method you were using prior to the lip repair. Your infant will continue to use a cleft-adapted bottle/nipple until one-month after the palate repair.

How will surgery impact offering purees?

It is recommended purees be introduced around 6 months of age. If your infant has already started purees prior to lip repair, s/he can immediately return to purees with a spoon. If your infant has not yet started purees prior to the repair, it is recommended to wait to introduce purees until age appropriate, typically 6 months of age.

Is my infant allowed to have a pacifier after surgery?

Pacifiers should not be used for 14 days (2 weeks) after surgery. It is best to wean the infant off of the pacifier prior to surgery. You can try poking a hole in the bottom of pacifier for a few days and then slowly cut the pacifier back every couple of days until the infant can no longer suck on the pacifier.

What if my infant is not eating after surgery?

First, give your infant some time. Sometimes coming out of the anesthesia can be difficult. Start with offering the same bottle that you were using before surgery. If your infant continues to have difficulty, try using one nipple size bigger on the Dr. Brown Specialty Feeding System or one flow line faster on the Haberman bottle. If your infant continues to have difficulty, request a consultation with a speech-language pathologist.

Do I need to be seen back after surgery for feeding therapy?

Your infant should be seen back at Barrow Cleft and Craniofacial Center one week after surgery and again one month after surgery.

Summary for after surgery:

	Liquids	Purees	Pacifier
Post lip repair	Immediately return to preoperative cleft adapted bottle/nipple	Immediately return to purees with spoon as age appropriate	No pacifier for 14 days

