

MILK DROPS



Before you were born...you were practicing to eat
You could smell, taste, suck, and swallow

Why is this so important?

- The premature brain is still developing.
- Nerve pathways or connections are being made in response to every experience.
- Repetitive enjoyable feeding experiences establish enjoyable feeding connections.
- These connections may affect the ability and desire to eat in the NICU and after.



NEW BORN BRAIN

ADULT BRAIN

As often as possible...

We will help mom and dad hold you skin to skin

- helps keep warm
- stabilizes heartrate
- improves breathing
- improves oxygenation
- increases sleep time
- increase weight gain
- helps calm/relax
- decrease crying
- increase milk supply
- helps parents bond

Making connections so you will like to eat

We will give your parents **cloth scent hearts** to wear and bring back to place near your face. Your parent's scent is familiar and comforting to you.

We will place you **on your side** so it is easier for you to stay tucked and flexed.

We will place your **hands by your face** so you learn to comfort yourself and it is easier for you to suck and taste your fingers.

1. We will give you a few **drops** of milk. If you lick the milk we will **OFFER** you a swab or pacifier
2. If you **ACCEPT** the swab or pacifier we will give you more milk a drop at a time
3. If you lick but **REFUSE** the swab or pacifier we will let you lick milk a drop at a time.
4. However...if you **DON'T RESPOND** we will let you rest. You will have an opportunity with your next feeding.

It will feel familiar as you grow and when you learn to nurse or bottle feed.