

## Pacifiers: Benefits for Babies

Provide essential non-nutritive sucking, especially for babies with special needs or preemies

Provides pain relief for minor procedures, especially in children in the NICU & hospital setting

May assist in oral motor development including tongue cupping needed for feeding skills

Reduces the risk of SIDS when offered at the onset of sleep



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## Pacifiers: Benefits & Bigger Risks from 6 months to 12 months

Continues to offer some protection against SIDS, although the risk of SIDS is very low after baby is 6 months old

Increased risk of otitis media with continued use after 6 months of age.

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Otitis media is...

- Painful & often requires antibiotics
- Kids with early-onset otitis media (under 12 months) are at high risk of developing long-term speech & language problems.



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## Pacifiers: Kids over 12 months

- ✓ No benefits
- ✓ Harder to wean
- ✓ Palate formation & facial growth is starting to be impacted due to low tongue resting posture
- ✓ Frequency, duration of use, & intensity of suck are contributing factors.



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**Pacifiers have many benefits, but it's important to wean early.**

*Parents often ask:*

- Why do some professionals suggest waiting to introduce a pacifier, and when is it too late?
- Which pacifier shape is best? Why is there so much debate on social media about that?
- What benefits are provided by pacifiers? What risks?
- When is the optimal age to wean and how do we help baby wean?
- What about toddlers? How long can I wait to wean?
- Should I switch my toddler to a different pacifier for the best mouth development?
- Once my child is weaned, what are common concerns and scenarios do I need to be aware of?

**PLUS, parents need problem solving strategies if their child...**

- Weans early -starts to suck their thumb
- Has no other way to comfort
- Insists on pacifiers in the daytime
- Relies on the pacifier to fall asleep
- Begins to chew the sleeves and collars of their clothes instead

Take the on-demand course **Pacifiers: Everything You Need to Know from Choosing the Right One to Weaning Babies and Toddlers**

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