



# BOTTLE FEEDING BEST PRACTICES

## *for neonatal kittens*



### Ensure the Kitten is Alert

Kittens should be fully awake and alert before and during a feeding. If a kitten is sleeping, wait until they wake up for their next meal.



### Positioning is Key

A natural, belly-down position is best for feeding kittens.



### Use Fresh Formula

Formula should be less than 24 hours old — ideally less than 12 hours old.



### Check Nipple Flow

Formula should drip slowly from the bottle when held upside down.  
*Ensure the bottle cap is loose to maximize airflow.*



### Administer Medication

Before or after feeding, if needed.



### Assist With Elimination

Kittens may need to be eliminated before they will nurse. If a kitten isn't latching, try stimulating before feeding to make sure they are not in any discomfort.



### Prioritize Cleanliness

Keep a kitten clean with warm water and gentle motions to prevent infections.



*Above all: be patient and observant!*





## TROUBLESHOOTING

### *Why won't my kitten nurse?*



**Kitten is cold or dehydrated**

Don't feed your kitten until they are stable, warm and hydrated



**Kitten is not hungry**

Especially with new intakes of healthy kittens older than 2 weeks



**Formula is too cold or hot**

Formula, bottle and nipple should all be warm



**Formula is bad**

Try a new bag, your kitten might not like the taste if your formula is bad



**Kitten may need to eliminate**

Make sure your kitten has urinated/defecated before a feeding



**Kitten is not fully awake**

Your kitten should be alert for their feeding



**The nipple opening is too small**

Formula should drip slowly when held upside down



**Kitten has a physical deformity**

This should be noted during the intake exam (cleft palate, etc.)



**Kitten has an illness**

A big red flag! Seek medical attention for URI, panleukopenia, etc.



**Kitten is old enough for solid food**

Try offering your kitten solid food instead

