Forceful Letdown

Forceful letdown is when your milk flows very fast at the beginning of a feeding.

You may see these signs for baby
- choking or coughing early in the feeding or with letdown
- refusing the breast
- crying, arching or pulling off with letdown
- biting during the feeding
- hard to settle after feeding
- spits up often and is gassy
- has a shallow latch to slow the flow of milk

You may see these signs for mom
- breasts spray milk
- sore nipples from baby biting
- discomfort or pain with letdown

What to do

Try different positions:
- hold baby upright
- side lying
- lean back after latching
• feed baby with early feeding cues or when drowsy
• take baby off the breast if the baby chokes or coughs
• let the milk spray (or catch it in a container) until it slows, then offer the breast again
• wait until baby is calm before re-latching
• burp baby frequently
• offer second side if baby still seems hungry
• avoid missing feedings or giving formula

How long before this gets better?
• Be patient, forceful letdown may take a few weeks to improve. It gets better as baby gets older.
• If you need more help ask your public health nurse, lactation consultant or other health care provider.

Vancouver Coastal Health is committed to helping women successfully breastfeed. Please call your local Public Health Unit for additional information.

Other information on parenting are available at your local Community Health Office/Centre or online at http://vch.eduhealth.ca

You can get further information about breastfeeding from:
Public Health Nurse or Community Dietitian at Vancouver Coastal Health ................................................................. www.vch.ca
Baby’s Best Chance............................................ www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/parenting
VCH Parenting Website ............................................http://parenting.vch.ca/
HealthLinkBC .................................................................................................................................8-1-1
Translation services are available in 130 languages............. www.healthlinkbc.ca

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