

# Guide to sterilising your feeding equipment safely

Before you start using a bottle, it's vital that you know how to keep your baby's feeding equipment (bottles, teats, pumps etc.) clean and sterile. By following these easy steps, you can help reduce the harmful bacteria that can cause upset tummies, sickness and diarrhoea.



**1.** First, throw away any leftover milk. Wash your hands thoroughly, and wipe any work surfaces you will be using.



**2.** Using bottle and teat brushes, carefully clean bottles and teats with hot soapy water, removing all traces of milk, and rinse thoroughly under a running tap.



**3.** Sterilise feeding equipment by boiling for at least 5 minutes or cold water sterilising for at least 30 minutes. Either way, ensure all equipment is fully covered with water and no air bubbles are trapped inside. You can also use steam or microwave sterilising units, which take about 10 minutes.



**4.** Leave steriliser closed until feeding equipment is needed. Before removing equipment, wash your hands and use special tongs (which should also be sterilised) to pick up teats. Allow hot sterilising systems to cool before removing bottles and teats. Rinse equipment from cold water sterilisers with cooled boiled water before use.



**5.** Any remaining bottles and teats should be re-sterilised before use. Unopened steam and microwave sterilisers, and boiled equipment will remain sterile for around 3 hours, cold water sterilisers for 24 hours.



**6.** Breast pumps, breast shells and nipple shields should also be sterilised after every use in the same way. It's always best to check the product instructions first, as not all equipment is suitable for boiling.

**i** Always follow manufacturer's instructions when using sterilising units

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Breastfeeding is best for babies and provides many benefits. It is important that, in preparation for and during breastfeeding, you eat a healthy, balanced diet. Combined breast and bottlefeeding in the first weeks of life may reduce the supply of your own breastmilk, and reversing the decision not to breastfeed is difficult. The social and financial implications of using an infant milk should be considered. Improper use of an infant milk or inappropriate foods or feeding methods may present a health hazard. If you use an infant milk, you should follow manufacturer's instructions for use carefully – failure to follow the instructions may make your baby ill. Always consult your doctor, midwife or health visitor for advice about feeding your baby.

Healthcare professional helpline  
**0800 996 1234** [eln.nutricia.co.uk](http://eln.nutricia.co.uk)

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