

# Reflux

## Managing reflux in babies

### What is reflux?

Reflux is when milk from the stomach comes back up the oesophagus. The oesophagus is a tube that goes from the mouth to the stomach. A valve at the top of the stomach normally stops milk from coming back up. In some babies, this valve does not work well.

Reflux is common in young babies. Many babies bring up milk after feeding but they feel no pain and grow well. For some babies, the stomach acid will also come up with the milk. This can cause pain. Sometime babies bring up so much milk that they stop growing well. Most babies will stop having reflux by the time they are 12 months old. Babies can cry or be unsettled for lots of reasons. It is usually not because of reflux.

### What you can do

If your baby is mostly happy and growing well then you do not need to do anything.

If you are breastfeeding keep going.

If you think reflux is upsetting your baby try:

- feeding your baby upright and keeping them upright after feeds
- try to keep your baby quiet for about 20 to 30 minutes after feeding.

Thickened feeds (expressed breast milk with added thickener or a thickened infant formula) may stop the baby from vomiting the milk up but it will not stop milk coming back into the oesophagus.

Introducing solid food early (before four months) will not help

### When to ask for help

Talk to your GP or Child Health Nurse if:

- your baby is not growing well
- your baby does not feed well, for example, they only feed for a short time and get very fussy or upset
- your baby is very unsettled or seems uncomfortable
- you are worried.