

Media Release

Calmita – giving neonates a head start for successful breastfeeding

In hospitals, neonates and their mothers often experience difficulties breastfeeding. Preterm infants may even have to first learn how to coordinate sucking, swallowing and breathing. Calmita is a research-based hospital feeding solution, developed by Medela. Thanks to its unique technology it enables newborns to apply their natural feeding behaviour, thus developing their ability to breastfeed. Research findings have shown that preterm infants who were fed using Calmita had a significant increase in breastfeeding in the hospital and met discharge criteria significantly earlier than those fed with a conventional teat.

There are several reasons why neonates in hospitals and especially preterm infants experience difficulties breastfeeding. The preterm infant may not have fully developed the ability to coordinate sucking, swallowing and breathing, or the neuromuscular ability to generate sufficient intraoral vacuum for milk removal during breastfeeding. Other reasons why direct breastfeeding might not be possible are that the mother's breasts are not yet sufficiently developed to produce breastmilk due to preterm delivery, that the mother is ill or that the mother and infant are separated after birth.

Facilitating breastfeeding behaviour

Calmita is a research-based hospital feeding solution that enables newborns to use and progress their natural feeding behaviour and facilitates the transition to breastfeeding. Calmita's technology ensures that infants remove milk in a similar way to when they are at the breast. Neonates create an intraoral vacuum by using a downward tongue movement. While at the breast this action opens the milk ducts, in Calmita it opens the vacuum-controlled valve that allows milk to flow. With this, the infant decides when to drink and when to pause.

To suit a broader range of immature infant needs, Calmita is available in two versions in which the threshold levels of the vacuum-controlled valve are different. Calmita Starter can be used as soon as the neonate is able to create a minimum vacuum. The infant can move along to Calmita Advanced when creating vacuum becomes easier, thus providing a training effect. It is a single use, disposable product, delivered Clean by Manufacturing and thus Ready-to-Use.

The impact of Calmita

Research findings have shown that preterm infants fed with Calmita had a significant increase in breastfeeding in the hospital, when compared to infants fed with a conventional teat. Calmita helps the infant to meet hospital discharge criteria, resulting in a significant reduction in length of stay. In addition to lowering costs, this also decreases the risk of infection in the hospital, and allows earlier family unification.

Using Calmita requires little change in hospital practice, and the quality and simplicity of the Calmita design ensure safe application and easy handling.

For more information please visit www.medela-calmita.com.

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About Medela

Founded in 1961 by Olle Larsson and headquartered in the Canton of Zug, Switzerland, Medela concentrates on two business units: Breastfeeding, leading the way in the development and production of breastpumps, and Healthcare, specialising in the application of vacuum technology to medical suction devices. Medela conducts fundamental research together with leading scientists and universities, and uses the research results in the development of its products. Medela has 15 subsidiaries in Europe, North America and Asia, and distributes its products through independent partners in more than 90 countries. The company employs around 1,400 staff worldwide, 300 of whom are located in the Canton of Zug. www.medela.com