



## **Reexamination of nipple shield use, infant growth, and maternal satisfaction**

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### **Biography**

Dr. Chertok is an Associate Professor, teaching and conducting research at West Virginia University's School of Nursing in Morgantown, West Virginia in the United States. She is a maternal-infant researcher with a focus on lactation, as her clinical area of expertise involves her role as an IBCLC lactation consultant.

### **Abstract**

**Aims and objectives:** The primary objective of the multi-site, international study was to examine trends in weight gain for term infants breastfed with and without ultra-thin silicone nipple shields to determine the effect of nipple shield use on infant weight gain over two months. Additionally, the study examined maternal satisfaction with nipple shield use using a structured survey.

**Background:** The nipple shield may facilitate successful breastfeeding outcomes when indicated. There has been question regarding infant weight gain with nipple shield use. A published pilot study using within-subject design indicated no significant difference in infant test weights and maternal prolactin levels when breastfeeding with and without nipple shields (Chertok et al. 2006). The current study builds and expands upon the pilot study.

**Method:** Prospective, multisite, non-randomized, between-subject study of 54 maternal-infant dyads who used a nipple shield for breastfeeding.

**Results:** Results demonstrate no statistically significant difference in infant weight gain at 2 weeks, 1 month, and 2 months between infants who breastfed with and infants who breastfed without a nipple shield. A majority (89.8%) of the women reported a positive experience with nipple shield use and 67.3% of the women reported that the nipple shield helped prevent breastfeeding termination.

**Conclusion:** Infant weight gain was similar in maternal-infant dyads using nipple shields for 2 months compared to those not using the shields in a multisite study. Maternal positive report of nipple shield use lends to the clinical importance of nipple shield use when appropriately indicated.

**Relevance to clinical practice:** Nipple shield use may facilitate breastfeeding when clinically indicated in maternal-infant dyads without risk of decreased infant weight gain.

### **Objective**

Participants will identify the clinically indicated situations when a nipple shield may be beneficial to the maternal-infant dyad in promoting and extending the breastfeeding relationship.



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