

# D-CLEFT: AN INNOVATIVE METHOD FOR FEEDING NEONATES BORN WITH CLEFT PALATE

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**Introduction:** Babies born with cleft palate suffer from feeding problems which interfere with their nutrition and development; thereby, hampering the criteria for subsequent corrective surgery. The palatal cleft interferes with nursing and causes insufficient suckling or nasal regurgitation of food. Because of altered anatomy and presence of oro-nasal fistula, the baby tends to present suction difficulties due to lack of negative intraoral pressure. Upper respiratory tract infection and chronic catarrh are not frequent.

**Materials & Methods:** Here is a patented device for attaching on commercially available feeding bottles to facilitate effective nutrition method. The device's journey from concept to clinical use has been presented with a case series.

**Results:** The device was tried and tested successfully in many babies born with cleft palate. It has been successfully used for feeding neonates by their mothers/care-takers with almost no training required.

**Conclusion:** The device is extremely easy to use, easy to maintain and economical. In cases where modifying the feeding position alone cannot make much difference, these attachments can be advocated.

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