

NON-NUTRITIVE SUCKING (NNS)

DEFINITION

- Includes:
 - sucking of fingers
 - use of appropriately sized dummies with/without sucrose

INDICATIONS

- Actively promoted for:
 - comfort
 - pain relief
 - maximising nasal CPAP delivery. Can be used for short period to assist in acquisition of an effective seal
 - developing the sucking reflex and assisting transition from tube to full breast or bottle feeding
 - normal peristalsis helping to alleviate gastro-oesophageal reflux
- Encourages preterm babies not mature enough to suck at feed times to suck on a non-nutritive device during a tube feed
- Form of non-pharmacological pain relief during painful procedures
 - use expressed breast milk (EBM) for dummy dips (consider condition of baby)
 - if no EBM available, use sucrose
- Decreases:
 - stress
 - risk of SIDS (with appropriate sleeping positions)

CAUTIONS

- As baby begins to take more enteral feeds (at around 33 weeks), NNS no longer appropriate as may mask feeding cues

CONSENT

- Before commencing, ensure parents receive written information on suitable use of NNS on NNU
- A signed informed consent form must be held in baby's medical record