

A Guide to Transitioning to Neocate®

Expert Advice on Transitioning to Neocate

Developed with help from a Feeding Specialist



For most children, changing from one formula to another is simple and doesn't require a "transition period." However for some children a change in taste – such as a move from another formula to Neocate – can present a challenge. Also, some children starting Neocate may be new to formula – for instance transitioning from breast milk to Neocate, or adding Neocate to an elimination diet.

To transition to Neocate, we have worked with a feeding specialist to provide these helpful tips. Neocate products should be used under medical supervision. Contact your child's pediatrician or healthcare team to discuss this transition. You may also call 1-800-NEOCATE (1-800-636-2283), Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm, EST to speak with a Nutrition Specialist.

Fading

- Fading is a strategy where a small amount of a new formula is mixed with something the child is used to (such as expressed breast milk, another formula, or another beverage), gradually increasing the ratio of new to old over time. The goal is acceptance of the new combination, even if the difference is noticeable.

It is important that once you begin the transition, try not to return to the preferred beverage if your child refuses. Instead, decrease the ratio of Neocate to previous beverage just slightly.

- For some children: the slower, the better - others may transition very quickly. Each child will have his or her own unique pace, which can range from a few days to a few weeks. **You can use the table below as a guide to fading.** The goal is successfully moving forward, even if the pace is very gradual.
- In the case of Neocate formulas, fading works best if your child can take Neocate in a bottle or cup. For infants, introducing Neocate will be easier if he or she has some experience with bottle feeding. If your child is exclusively breastfed, begin the transition with breast milk in a bottle. When your child consistently accepts the bottle, you can begin to fade in Neocate.
- When transitioning between powdered formulas, you should mix each formula separately following the directions on the can, and then combine the prepared formulas in a clean container. Once mixed, unused Neocate formula can be safely stored in a refrigerator for up to 24 hours.

A GUIDE TO FADING:

DAY	Old formula or beverage	Mixed formulas	Neocate formula
DAY 1	75% Examples: 75% of a 4-ounce bottle is 3 fluid ounces 75% of a 6-ounce bottle is 4½ fluid ounces Child should take _____ fl oz		25% Examples: 25% of a 4-ounce bottle is 1 fluid ounce 25% of a 6-ounce bottle is 1½ fluid ounces Child should take _____ fl oz
DAY 2	50% Child should take _____ fl oz		50% Child should take _____ fl oz
DAY 3	25% Child should take _____ fl oz		75% Child should take _____ fl oz
DAY 4	None		100% Child should take _____ fl oz



If at first you don't succeed:

- Infants often don't seem to notice a difference when switching to Neocate, but those that do usually adjust to Neocate over a few days.
- If your child rejects Neocate, don't assume he or she doesn't like it. In typical development, research shows that children may need up to 20 exposures to a new food before they will try it. Keep presenting it and read on for strategies to promote acceptance...

Choices:

- For children, offering several acceptable choices can help. Choices are especially helpful when children are having preferred foods removed from their diet. Having a choice gives the child control over what they can have, and shifts the focus off of what they can't.
- In the case of older children Neocate offers multiple flavor options: Strawberry, Vanilla, Chocolate, Grape, Orange-Pineapple, Tropical and Unflavored. Neocate Splash offers on-the-go convenience and doesn't look like a typical formula, and Neocate Nutra offers a spoonable consistency for older infants and children.
- Give children as much control as possible in choosing which flavor they would like to try, meal planning, cup selection, plates, bowls etc. Doing so will help foster investment in the mealtime process and increase motivation and participation. Possible choices to offer: "Which flavor: Strawberry or Vanilla?" "Which bowl: red or blue?"

Model, Schedule and Routine:

- Children learn to eat via observation and positive experiences. If your child is old enough to sit for meals consider eating and drinking with them, modeling the desired behavior. This communicates to them that it's ok to try something new. It's important to not "fake it"; this teaches your child to model just that, faking!
- To the greatest extent possible, eliminate or minimize distractions during mealtimes, making the focus of the meal pleasurable eating and drinking experiences, social communication, and nourishment.
- Provide meals and snacks seated at a table, in a booster seat or in a highchair at regular intervals throughout the day to create hunger, establish predictability and provide four to six opportunities for a child to have exposure to Neocate. A schedule and routine around mealtimes is important for children on an elemental diet to help foster the developmental opportunities surrounding mealtimes (language, social, and fine motor skills), and maintain a foundation for future diet expansion.

Language:

- There is power in what you do and don't say. What comes out of your mouth is just as important as what goes into your child's mouth. Avoid asking yes/no questions if you don't want to accept "No!" as an answer. For example, "It's time for a snack!" versus "Do you want a snack?"
- What you communicate non-verbally is just as important. If the look on your face says "yuck!" as you and your child are trying Neocate for the first time, you are likely to influence your child's lack of acceptance.

Try It!:

- For toddlers, trying Neocate doesn't have to mean drinking it the first time. It may mean exploring with all your senses: What does it look like? Smell like? How does it feel on my tongue and teeth? Don't be afraid to be playful! The goals are to explore without pressure, build familiarity and comfort, and - eventually - try it!

Consistency:

- When embarking on a transition - any transition - the consistency with which you and anyone else caring for your child practice any of the above strategies will have an impact on success. The more consistent the experience, the faster your child learns.

When to seek help?

- If the changes to your child's routine are feeling a little too bumpy, talk to your doctor about seeking help from a Feeding Specialist. Feeding Specialists are typically Speech-Language Pathologists or Occupational Therapists who specialize in feeding and swallowing development and difficulties.

Here is a list of criteria to help you decide when to seek help:

- Your child's nutrition and/or growth are compromised
- Your child is unwilling to drink Neocate
- Your child is not participating in mealtimes
- Mealtimes are stressful
- Feeding issues disrupt daily life
- Your child is unable or unwilling to eat certain textures of food, or foods which are allowed in their diet (especially if the allowed number is limited due to food allergies)
- Your child is not feeding self as expected for age/ability



Acknowledgement

Nutricia North America would like to thank Angela Haas for her consultation. Angela Haas, MA, CCC-SLP is a Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing Specialist at a Children's Hospital in Colorado. Angela has 20 years of experience evaluating and treating children with feeding and swallowing difficulties, and has conducted research in the areas of feeding, swallowing, mealtime dynamics, gastrointestinal dysfunction and food allergies.