

# Nipple Shields



- Nipple shields ... controversial, hated, overused.
- But are nipple shields really as terrible as we once thought?
- Are they always contraindicated?
- Research, literature, and the experiences of mothers and health professionals.

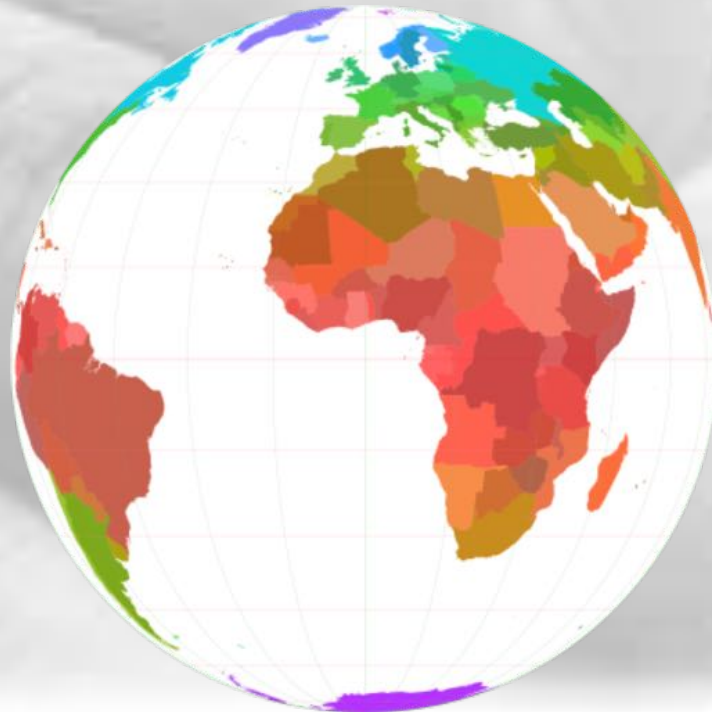


- Nipple shields are not new
- Lead, wax, wood, gum elastic, pewter, tin, horn, bone, ivory, silver, glass, rubber, latex



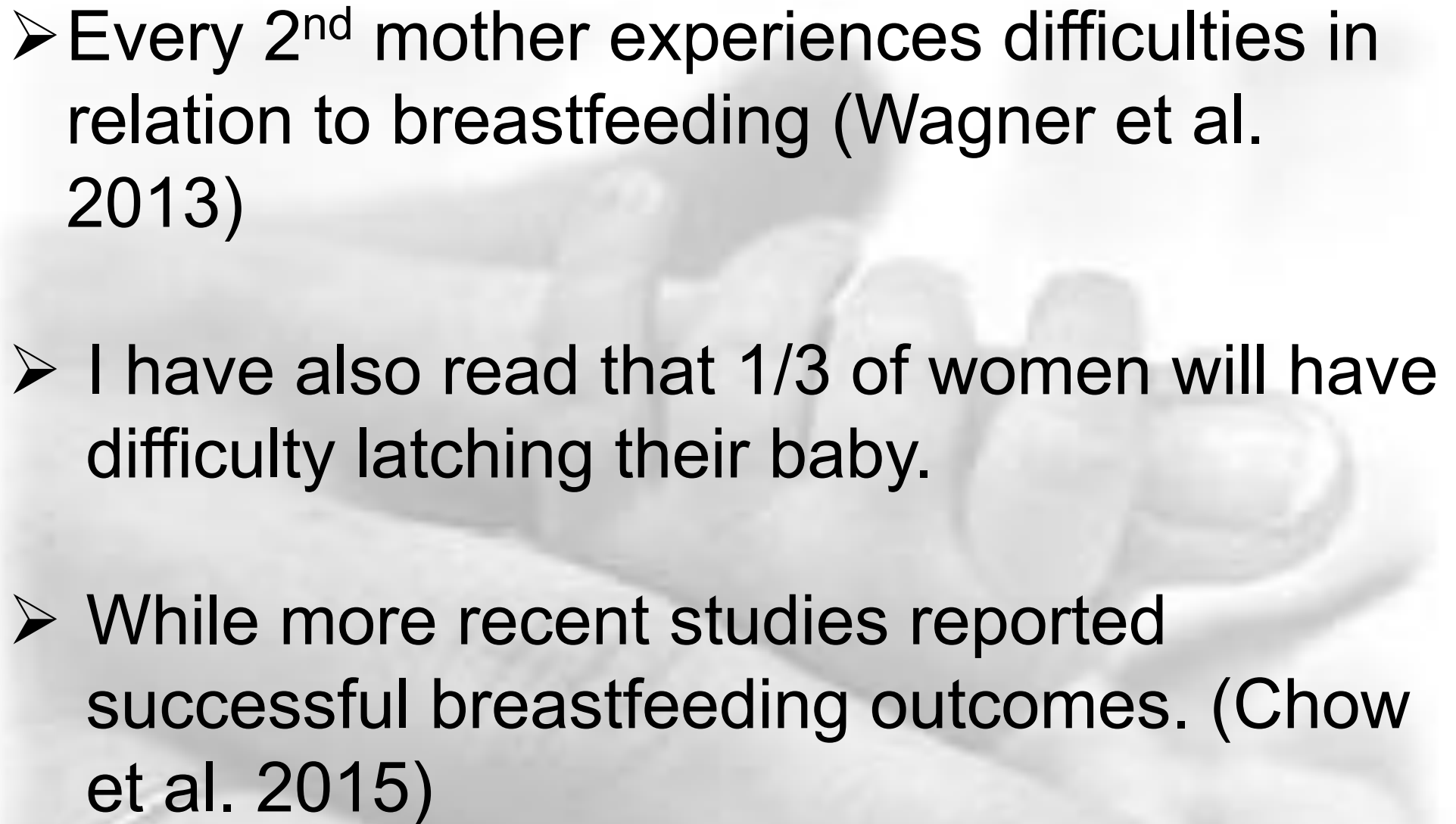


- Silicone nipple shields used today
- Countries around the world are seeing an increase in nipple shield use today



**These should  
never be used**



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- Every 2<sup>nd</sup> mother experiences difficulties in relation to breastfeeding (Wagner et al. 2013)
  - I have also read that 1/3 of women will have difficulty latching their baby.
  - While more recent studies reported successful breastfeeding outcomes. (Chow et al. 2015)

# The use of nipple shields: a review

➤ *Nipple Shields: A Review of the Literature*  
*McKechnie and Eglash (2010)*

- 13 articles reviewed
- 3 categories – a) physiological responses to NS  
b) NS use in preterm infants  
c) mothers' experiences with NS





# **Nipple Shields: A Review of the Literature** **McKechnie and Eglash (2010)**

a) physiological responses to NS

“Mexican hat” vs thin latex



**Nipple Shields: A Review of the Literature**  
**McKechnie and Eglash (2010)**

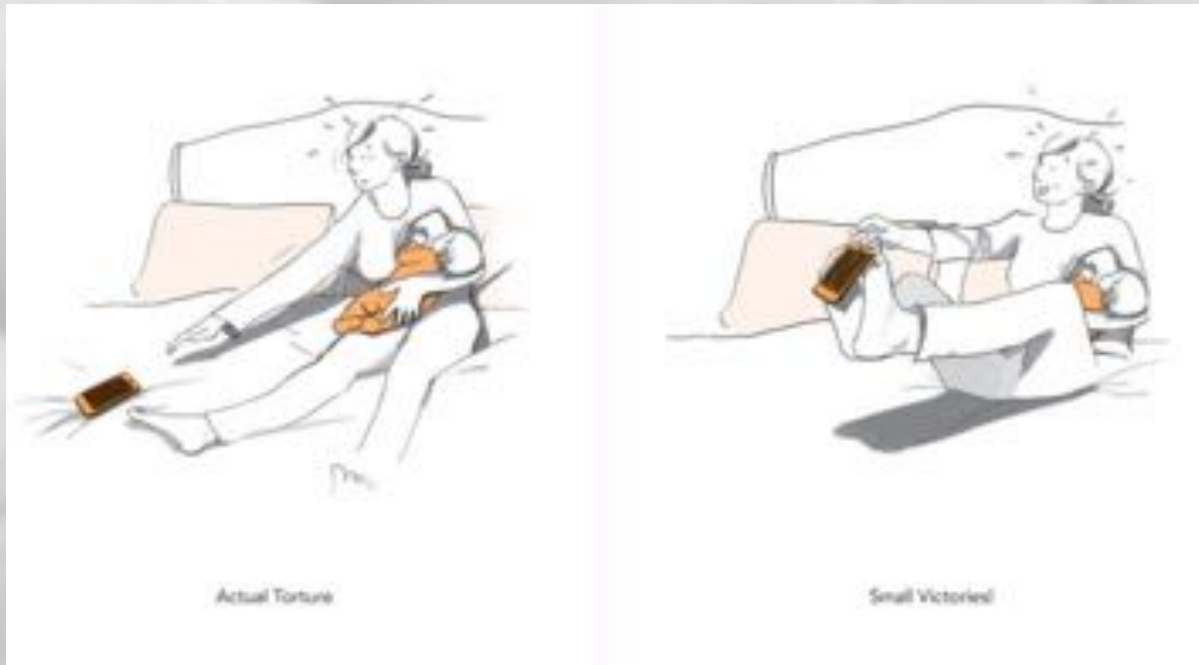
a) physiological responses to NS

Prolactin and Cortisol levels

Suckling time and milk transfer

# *Nipple Shields: A Review of the Literature* *McKechnie and Eglash (2010)*

a) physiological responses to NS  
pumping with and without a NS



➤ **Nipple Shields: A Review of the Literature**  
**McKechnie and Eglash (2010)**

b) NS use in  
preterm infants

Reviewed 2  
studies  
1996 & 2000



➤ **Nipple Shields: A Review of the Literature**  
**McKechnie and Eglash (2010)**

c) Mother's experiences

Reviewed 8 studies



# The use of nipple shields: a review

*The use of nipple shields: a review*  
*Chow, S. et al (2015)*

- 14 articles reviews
- 4 categories – a) physiological responses  
b) premature infants  
c) mother's experiences  
d) health professionals



**The use of nipple shields: a review**  
**Chow, S. et al (2015)**

a) physiological responses



**The use of nipple shields: a review**  
**Chow, S. et al (2015)**

b) premature infants





**The use of nipple shields: a review**  
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c) mother's experiences



**The use of nipple shields: a review**  
**Chow, S. et al (2015)**

d) health professionals



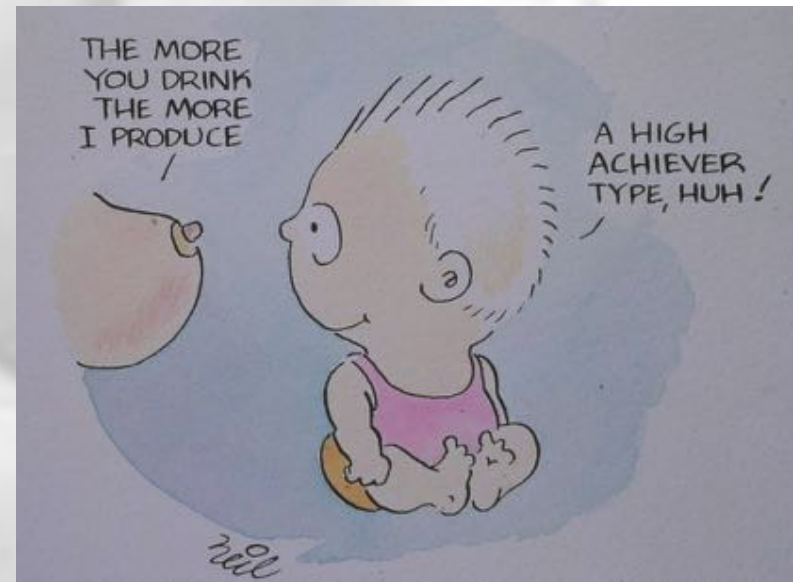
Why do mothers use nipple shields and how does this influence duration of exclusive breastfeeding?

Kronborg, et al (2016)



# Possible Indications for Nipple Shield Use

- Nipple anomalies (flat, retracted, fibrous, inelastic breast tissue)
- Latching difficulties
- Baby with a weak/disorganized suck
- Painful breastfeeding (Kronborg et al)



# Possible Indications for Nipple Shield Use

Oral Cavity problems:

Palate issues : Cleft, Channel, Bubble palate  
– due to vacuum delivery

Lack of fat pads (preterm, SGA)

Poor central grooving of tongue

Receding jaw

Upper airway problems

Tracheomalacia

Laryngomalacia



# Reported Disadvantages

- Risk of low milk transfer, resulting low milk supply and weight gain
  - Baby becoming dependent on nipple shield
  - Inconvenient to have to always have one with you
  - Becomes costly for mothers – at a cost of \$9.88 per shield
  - Constantly being lost, pets eating them

# What does BFI say?



BCC BFI STEP 9 says:

Support mothers to feed and care for their breastfeeding babies without the use of artificial teats or pacifiers (dummies or soothers).

# What does BFI say?

Under the indicators for  
STEP 9 it tells us;



***Nipple shields are not routinely provided***

- assessment***
- document***
- support***
- information***
- follow-up***



# Different sizes of nipple shields



**24 mm**



**20 mm**



**16 mm**

# Instructions for use of a nipple shield



**Image of mother inverting  
nipple shield during application**



- Compressions
- Milk seen in the shield
- Wash & Rinse
- If yeast is present, boil 5 minutes daily
- Weight should be monitored closely until baby gaining well



**Correct latch is important!**

**Remember** – latching is the



of breastfeeding success!

**Proper Latch**



**Poor Latch**



# Weaning from the Shield

- Mother's perception
- No set time.





**TO WAIT**

**OR**

**NOT TO WAIT?**

**THAT IS THE QUESTION.**



Here is some actual cases  
from personal experience  
and searching the internet for  
discussion pages.....



# Key Messages

- Nancy Mohrhacher, author of BAMS, says **“a mother can feel at ease about using a nipple shield as long as it helps the baby breastfeed more effectively.”**
- **Used or misused.**
- **Health Professionals BE AWARE**

# Key Messages

- Critical assessment and continuous follow-up.
- Nothing can replace skilled help.
- Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up



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