

Weaning from Night Feedings
“Part 1 of Sleep Training: Weaning”
(Blog Entry from littlesproutings.com)

The overall principle (with Sleepeasy Solution) is to feed shorter and shorter every night. Start by taking note (I use the Sprout Baby iPhone app) the time and length of each feeding during the nighttime. Do this for about a week to get an idea of what time your baby naturally wakes up to eat. When you start to wean, you wake your baby up 1 hour before she will wake on her own and feed for the longest time she's been eating at this feeding throughout the past week. ONLY wake her enough to eat (she can stay drowsy and eat, don't talk to her or make much eye contact). You are anticipating her hunger so she doesn't wake up because she is hungry. Do this for all night feedings. On proceeding nights, cut feeding time by 2 minutes each feeding. Eventually you will wean out all night time feedings:

Example: 8 PM Bedtime, if you note that baby wakes up at/around 11:30 PM (feeds 10 minutes max over the past week), at/around 2:30 AM (feeds 8 minutes max over the past week), and at/around 5 AM (eats 7 minutes max over the past week). If baby wakes up at any other point and feeds less than 2 minutes, do not count those as feedings (Sleepeasy says these are comfort feedings, and as long as you are waking baby up to feed, she shouldn't wake for these blip feedings):

Night 1:

1. Wake baby at 10:30 PM, feed for 10 minutes
2. Wake baby at 1:30 AM, feed for 8 minutes
3. Wake baby at 4 AM, feed 7 minutes

Night 2:

1. Wake baby at 10:30 PM, feed for 8 minutes
2. Wake baby at 1:30 AM, feed for 6 minutes
3. Wake baby at 4 AM, feed for 5 minutes

Night 3:

1. Wake baby at 10:30 PM, feed for 6 minutes
2. Wake baby at 1:30 AM, feed for 4 minutes
3. Wake baby at 4 AM, feed for 3 minutes

Night 4:

1. Wake baby at 10:30 PM, feed for 4 minutes
2. Wake baby at 1:30 AM, feed for 2 minutes
3. Wake baby at 4 AM, feed for 2 minutes

Night 5:

1. Wake baby at 10:30 PM, feed for 2 minutes
2. Feeding weaned!
3. Feeding weaned!

Night 6:

1. Feeding weaned!
2. Feeding weaned!
3. Feeding weaned!

For Jia, it was hard to go from 4 to 2 minutes. So, what I did was feed Jia 3 minutes, then another night of 3 minutes, then another night of 2 minutes, then I stopped waking her for that feeding. Any time I noticed, between 2 and 3 minutes, that she was resting between sucks, I would un-latch her then eventually put her back in the crib.

Your baby will most likely stay asleep/very drowsy when you rouse her to feed. Jia always stayed drowsy and she didn't have much trouble drifting back off to sleep in her crib... that is, unless she pooped while she was eating, then I had to change her diaper. If your baby doesn't poop, the books recommend to NOT change them. Sometimes it was hard to tell if Jia pooped (she hadn't been introduced to solids yet, so she didn't grunt to poop, it just came out if you know what I mean), but if I didn't feel it then I put her back down. Sometimes that meant we woke up to poo on her PJ's, but other times we just had a full wet diaper. Eventually as your baby gets a little older, she will have a more normal diapering routine and probably not poop at night if she doesn't nurse at night.

Remember** after your baby is successfully weaned, continue with this for a couple weeks BEFORE you start to sleep train.

Your milk supply should shift to the daytime and your baby will “make up” for it by eating more at her first feeding. Your body will adjust and your breasts won't feel as full in the morning as it adjusts.

Hopefully you have milk stocked up in the freezer if you are working. If not, I recommend pumping after baby has gone to bed for a few hours (after weaning is completed) to start up your stockpile. But, if you're pumping at work then that's all you'd really need!