



Recommendations for Test Weights

Purpose Statement:

To accurately assess milk transfer .

Responsible Persons:

Lactation Consultants (IBCLC's), IBCLC candidates, RN's and LPN's with documented competency.

Policy Statement:

- I. Test weights are performed when an accurate assessment of milk transfer is necessary.
- II. Accuracy in test weights is dependent upon consistently weighing baby pre- and post-feeding with the same additional items e.g. clothing, diaper, monitor cables, and leads.
- III. When test weights are performed on babies with continuous IV fluids, monitoring or oxygen, the accuracy of the test weight is reduced.
- IV. Same scale should be used during each individual test weight.
- V. Scale should be calibrated per manufacturer's instructions or sooner if indicated. Assure calibration is documented.

Procedure:

I. Equipment:

- A. Baby Weigh Scale or a scale with accuracy to one gram
- B. Surface protector

II. Guidelines:

- A. Place scale on level surface. Follow manufacturers instructions for leveling or calibrating the scale.
- B. Add weighing paper or other surface protector.
- C. Turn on scale. Allow to zero.
- D. Place baby on scale. Ensure that everything is on the scale and nothing is dangling over the sides.
- E. Wait for scale to lock-in on weight.
- F. Record weight.
- G. Feed the baby. Do not change the diaper or any additional items (e.g. clothing, diaper, monitor cables, and leads).between test weights.
- H. Place baby on scale. Ensure that everything is on the scale and nothing is dangling over the sides.
- I. Wait for scale to lock-in on weight.
- J. Record weight. Record differences in weight as milk intake. One gram equals one milliliter.

Documentation:

- I. Record on patient record.

References:

Riordan, J. *Breastfeeding and Human Lactation*

(2004) *Third Edition Sudbury, MA:* Jones and Bartlett Publishers

Meier, P., Engstrom, J., Fleming, B., Streeter, P., and Lawrence, P. Estimating Milk Intake of Hospitalized Preterm Infants Who Breastfed. J Hum Lact 12(1) 1996