

from the family physician



Correct Position for Burping Babies

Most mothers and nurses do not understand this because they have little idea of the anatomy within infants. The correct shoulder for burping babies is the one on the right. On the left shoulder, burping usually leads to vomiting curds and milk.

To understand this, and a simple explanation to "mothers who know best" is to imagine the baby's stomach - as the infant faces you - as a coffee pot, with the spout facing to the left and the handle to the right. At the top of the pot, or stomach, is a dome or "gas-cap". The "spout" is the inlet of the gullet or oesophagus to the stomach sack.

If you put the baby on the left shoulder and go "pat-pat", then the coffee pours out of the spout, i.e. the curds and whey erupt and end up messily down the back of the mother! Whereas if Mummy puts the baby on the right (correct) shoulder, the spout of the coffee pot (oesophagus) points upwards and allows the wind, or the gas in the dome, to move to the top of the pot, and escape. Burping is then satisfactory all round. **SMA**