

DRINKING ESSENTIALS

Additional Instructions for ARK's Sip-Tip[®], Cip-Kup[™], Bear Bottle,
Select-Flow Valve, Vangi Valve, One-Way Straws, & Lip Blok[™]



Congratulations on your purchase of ARK's **Cip-Kup™**, **Sip-Tip®**, **Bear Bottle**, **Select-Flow Valve**, **Vangi Valve**, **One-Way Straws**, and/or **Lip Blok™** - an innovative line to make drinking easier in therapy, at home, and on the go. Straw drinking can be a complicated task for some individuals, as it requires coordination of the lips, tongue, cheeks, and jaw. Luckily, however, there are many options available to work on improving these skills.

Benefits & Uses

Designed for individuals of all ages and cognitive abilities, these tools increase hydration while promoting a variety of oral motor skills necessary for proper feeding and drinking, including, but certainly not limited to:

- tongue retraction
- lip seal
- cheek strength
- correct jaw position
- suck-swallow-breathe coordination
- consecutive swallows
- graded control for liquids

They can also be used to teach straw drinking, to reduce coughing, choking, and aspiration, and to transition individuals from bottle feeding to cup drinking.

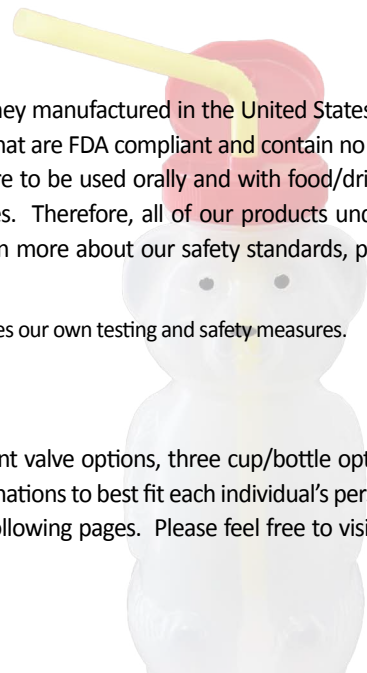
Safety Guarantee:

ARK's drinking aids are *Made in the USA*.* Not only are they manufactured in the United States, but they are also constructed out of medical grade materials that are FDA compliant and contain no lead, phthalates, PVC, BPA, or latex. Because these products are to be used orally and with food/drink, it is our first priority to enforce the highest safety guidelines. Therefore, all of our products undergo rigorous testing to ensure their top-notch quality. To learn more about our safety standards, please visit our website.

* The **Cip-Kup™** bottle is manufactured in Germany, but undergoes our own testing and safety measures.

Versatility:

ARK's complete line of drinking aids includes three different valve options, three cup/bottle options, and five **Lip Blok™** options - allowing for a variety of combinations to best fit each individual's personal needs/preferences. More on all of these options in the following pages. Please feel free to visit our website for more information and instructional videos.



ARK has three different types of valves available - a **Select-Flow Valve**, a **One-Way Straw**, and a **Vangi Valve**. Each of these valves is uniquely designed to benefit individuals with drinking difficulties. Their success is twofold:

- First of all, each valve controls the direction of fluid - liquid flows up into the straw, but does not flow back down into the cup. By keeping fluid at the top of the straw, these valves thereby reduce the amount of air ingested and the energy required to drink. As a result, users experience less coughing and choking and tend to consume more fluids.
- On the other hand, they also restrict the flow of fluid, which is perfect for individuals who tend to aspirate or to take too much fluid in one swallow. The restricted flow also helps to ensure that liquid is deposited in the front of the mouth.

These products save time and labor for the caregiver and/or therapist while increasing independence, dignity, and hydration for the user. All three valve options can be used with either the **Sip-Tip®** or the **Cip-Kup™**. The **Bear Bottle** works best with the **Select-Flow Valve**.

Select-Flow Valve

The **Select-Flow Valve** has a tapered stem that fits inside the bottom end of a straw. When purchased, this valve provides the highest level of flow restriction for users who tend to aspirate when taking too much fluid in one swallow. The valve can also be trimmed to increase the flow, thereby decreasing the effort required to drink.

One-Way Straws

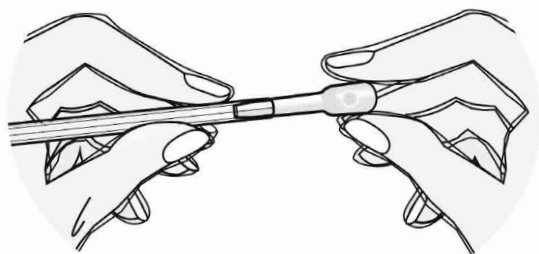
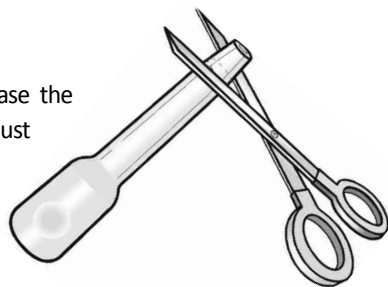
These disposable straws have a built-in valve in the bottom of each straw. Because the valve is built-in, this option provides the most convenience for the caregiver and is the least obvious in circumstances where patient/user dignity is of primary concern. The **One-Way Straws** provide mild flow restriction.

Vangi Valve

This is a lifetime re-usable valve made out of medical grade stainless steel. It is very easy to take apart, clean, and put back together, which is especially important if you plan to use thick or thickened liquids.

How to Trim the Select-Flow Valve:

The tip of the **Select-Flow Valve** can be trimmed to increase the diameter of the opening, thereby allowing for a freer flow. Adjust the flow you need by cutting back the tapered stem of the valve with a pair of scissors, as shown to the right. Please note that trimming the valve is optional, but cannot be reversed once cut.

*Assembly:*

To assemble, simply press the smaller, tapered end of the valve into the bottom of the straw, as shown to the left. The same goes for the **Vangi Valve**. No assembly required for the **One-Way Straws**.

Cleaning:

- Wash all parts before initial use and immediately after each subsequent use. If left to harden, leftover liquids can damage and clog the valves.
- Clean the **Select-Flow Valves** by flushing with mild soap and water. They can also be washed in the dishwasher using either our Dishwasher Cleaning Bags or Spill-Proof Valve Cleaner, both available online. These products contain the valves and prevent them from getting lost in the dishwasher.
- To clean the **Vangi Valve**, take the valve apart and carefully place the parts in boiling water for the best results. Allow to cool before reassembling. The valve comes with an extra stainless steel ball and washer for your convenience.
- The **One-Way Straws** are disposable. No cleaning necessary.

Caution:

- Care should be taken to prevent the user from removing the valves and swallowing them.
- Not recommended for carbonated beverages.

ARK's Bear Bottle

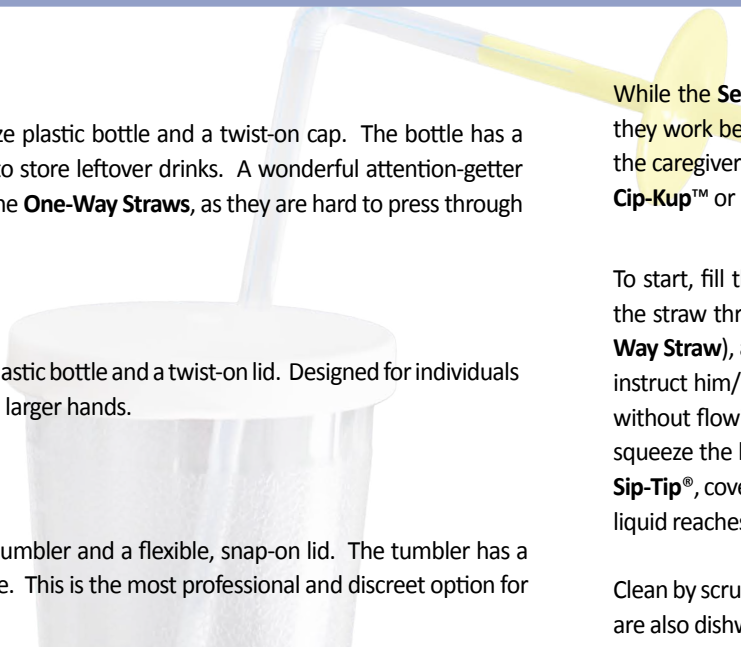
The **Bear Bottle** includes a clear, easy-to-squeeze plastic bottle and a twist-on cap. The bottle has a kid-friendly bear shape, and the lid snaps shut to store leftover drinks. A wonderful attention-getter for little ones. Not recommended for use with the **One-Way Straws**, as they are hard to press through the lid.

ARK's Cip-Kup™

The **Cip-Kup™** includes a clear, easy-to-squeeze plastic bottle and a twist-on lid. Designed for individuals of all ages, this bottle fits easily in both small and larger hands.

ARK's Sip-Tip®

The **Sip-Tip®** includes a rigid, high-quality 8 oz. tumbler and a flexible, snap-on lid. The tumbler has a graduated scale on its side to monitor fluid intake. This is the most professional and discreet option for older individuals.



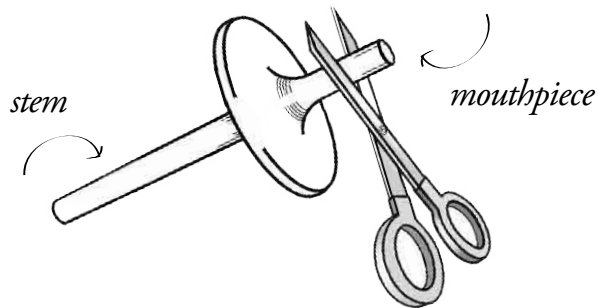
While the **Select-Flow Valve**, **One-Way Straws**, and **Vangi Valve** can certainly be used on their own, they work best when paired with one of ARK's cup sets. The main benefit to this combination is that the caregiver or therapist can assist the drinking process by either squeezing the bottle of the **Bear** or **Cip-Kup™** or pumping the lid of the **Sip-Tip®**.

To start, fill the cup/bottle with water, juice, etc. - any liquid that the individual prefers. Then push the straw through the lid, press the valve into the bottom of the straw (skip this step if using a **One-Way Straw**), and twist or press the lid onto the cup/bottle. Place the straw on the individual's lips and instruct him/her to drink. Once the individual sucks fluid up into the straw, it will remain in the straw without flowing back into the cup. To assist drinking with either the **Cip-Kup™** or **Bear Bottle**, simply squeeze the bottle until the liquid reaches the desired height and release. To assist drinking with the **Sip-Tip®**, cover the vent hole in the center of the lid with your finger. Press down several times until the liquid reaches the desired height and release.

Clean by scrubbing with mild soap and water before initial use and after each subsequent use. All parts are also dishwasher-safe.

ARK's **Lip Bloks** are a wonderful addition to any therapy program. Not only do they prevent individuals from biting the straw and/or inserting the straw too far into the mouth, but they can also be used to discourage tongue-thrusting, to promote tongue retraction, to improve cheek tension, and to correct overall lip and tongue position.

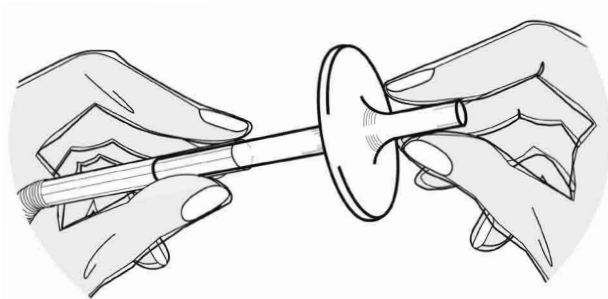
The **Lip Bloks** fit into any regular drinking straw and come in three different lengths - 1/4", 1/2", and the standard 3/4". They are also available in a flexible material (firm and soft) that can be cut to any desired length.



Create your own personalized length by trimming the mouthpiece of the flexible **Lip Blok™** to any standard or custom length with a pair of scissors, as shown to the left.

Directions:

Lip Bloks work the mouth muscles naturally. Use the longest 3/4" **Lip Blok™** first, then the 1/2", and finally the 1/4". This hierarchy allows individuals to slowly adjust to the shorter length, which in turn teaches them to insert less of the straw into the mouth.

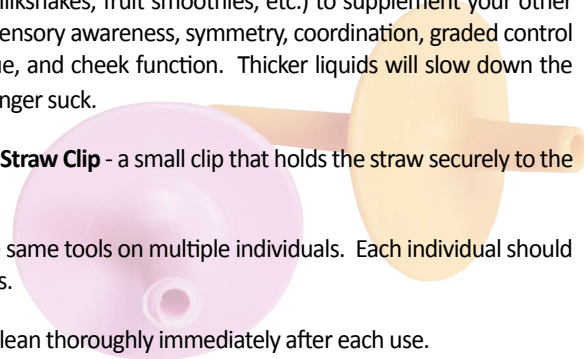


To use with a regular straw, simply press the stem of the **Lip Blok™** into the straw, as shown to the left. To use with a Crazy Straw, press the stem of a flexible **Lip Blok™** OVER the straw. Wetting and/or trimming the stem will make it easier to press over.

Clean before initial use and after each subsequent use with mild soap and water. Each **Lip Blok™** is also 100% dishwasher-safe. Please use caution to prevent the user from removing the **Lip Blok™** and swallowing it.

1. Using either the **Bear Bottle**, **Cip-Kup™**, or **Sip-Tip®**, place the straw on the individual's lips at a slightly tilted down angle. Squeeze the bottle or pump the lid so that a few drops of liquid flow into the individual's mouth. The goal here is for the individual to comprehend that liquid comes from the straw. As you are doing this, tell the individual to "take a sip."
2. Once the individual comprehends the idea of drinking liquid from a straw, instruct the individual to close his/her lips around the straw. You may have to provide lip closure exercises to assist with this skill. Stretching the lips beforehand and pinching them together may help.
3. Once the individual is able to close his/her lips around the straw with ease, it is time to work on sucking liquid from the straw. Place the straw just inside the mouth without pumping fluid. When a sucking response is initiated, pump fluid into the mouth. Quickly repeat so the individual understands the idea of continuous sipping.
4. Keep practicing. Continue until the individual understands that he/she needs to suck to drink. This may take more than just a few times. Be patient, calm, and supportive, praising all the while. Once the individual can drink from a straw, he/she can then use the **Bear Bottle**, **Cip-Kup™**, or **Sip-Tip®** as a transition from bottle to cup drinking.

- Cold water is more alerting and increases awareness of the liquid.
- When observing the individual drink, make sure that the straw is centered in the middle of the lips at midline. If it is not, check for correct posture. The individual should NOT be bending his/her head forward to reach the straw. Instruct the individual to hold the cup (if possible) and bring the straw to his or her lips.
- Try varying the liquid consistencies (milkshakes, fruit smoothies, etc.) to supplement your other intervention strategies for increasing sensory awareness, symmetry, coordination, graded control for liquids, jaw stability, and lip, tongue, and cheek function. Thicker liquids will slow down the flow of the fluid and will require a stronger suck.
- Manage difficult situations with ARK's **Straw Clip** - a small clip that holds the straw securely to the cup. No more "chasing" the straw!
- For sanitary purposes, do NOT use the same tools on multiple individuals. Each individual should have his or her own set of drinking aids.
- To prolong the life of these products, clean thoroughly immediately after each use.



Chew Tools

In addition to our drinking aids, we also manufacture a complete line of medical grade, non-toxic chewing tools made right here in the USA. Available in a wide variety of colors, sizes, scents, textures, and resiliencies, ARK's **Y-Chew**[®] and **Grabber**[®] can be used for many applications. Caregiver *and* therapist approved:

- To decrease thumb-sucking, finger/knuckle biting, and/or tooth-grinding
- As an alternative to biting/chewing on fingers, shirts, pencils, and other hazardous non-food items
- As an opportunity for sensory overloaded individuals to calm and soothe themselves
- To de-sensitize the mouth for individuals with oral defensiveness and food aversions
- To improve biting and chewing skills without the risk of choking
- To increase tongue mobility & lateralization
- To practice jaw grading & stability
- To transition from puréed to textured foods

Customer Testimonial:

“The **Y-Chew** is great for working with little ones on munching and development of the rotary chew. I love the pliable material it is made of and the varied textures. It is so versatile with three different sides to choose from, and the long portion of the Y makes a great handle for the therapist. Fits perfectly in the hands of little ones as well to provide independent oral stimulation in an appropriate manner. My favorite chew tool so far!”

ARK's Z-Vibe[®] and DnZ-Vibe[®]

We also manufacture the **Z-Vibe**[®] and **DnZ-Vibe**[®], innovative tools for oral motor therapy and beyond. This device provides a vast range of sensory stimulation for individuals of all ages and cognitive abilities. There are over 30 interchangeable tips available for both the **Z-Vibe**[®] and **DnZ-Vibe**[®] to work on a wide variety of goals both in therapy and at home. These skills include, but are certainly not limited to:

tongue lateralization • tongue tip elevation • tongue bowl • tongue/jaw dissociation
tongue retraction • jaw grading & stability • lip seal • lip extension • biting & chewing
texture acceptance • oral awareness & de-sensitization • toothbrushing • writing skills

Most people are either auditory or visual learners. Sometimes, however, these two senses are not enough, and we must look to other options, such as the sense of touch. The **Z-Vibe**[®] / **DnZ-Vibe**[®] is a tool to help therapists use tactile input to work on all of the above skills. It can always be used in the off position without vibration. Or, it can be turned on for additional sensory input with its smooth, gentle vibrations. Vibration provides a new level of sensory stimulation to increase awareness and to draw more acute attention to the articulators. Feel free to visit our website for more information and instructional videos.



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