

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHOOSING AND PREPARING INFANT FORMULAS

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About 30 percent of mothers are breast feeding their infants and 15 percent of mothers breast feed and formula feed their infants. Working and non working parents may choose to formula feed their infants for various reasons although breast feeding is recommended as the first option. There are alternatives to formula feeding your children through organizations that supply donated breast milk. If you choose to formula feed your infant here are some good tips on preparing infant formulas.

Choosing a formula

Work with your baby's doctor when making decisions on which formula to feed your baby. It is best to feed your baby Iron-fortified formula when the baby is not being breastfed or when a supplement to breastfeeding is needed. Studies have shown that iron-fortified formulas do not cause stomach aches and intestinal problems in babies.

Water used to mix concentrated or powdered infant formula

Ask your local health department to test the water you use to make the formula for anything that might harm a baby, such as lead, bacteria, nitrate pesticides or other chemicals. Bottled water can be used to mix formula, but is not sterile. When you have safe water to use in mixing formula, you will still always need to sterilize the water or you may purchase sterilized water. You can sterilize water by bringing cold water to a very bubbly boil, boiling it for 1 to 2 minutes, and then allowing it to cool. Do not boil the water for over 5 minutes because it could concentrate any lead or nitrate in the water. If you use tap water, collect only cold tap water for boiling by letting the cold tap run for 2 minutes and then collect the water. This helps to reduce the amount of lead in the water if the pipes contain lead.

Preparing Formula

- Clean and sanitize your workspace (Periodically sanitize kitchen countertops using a kitchen sanitizer)
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water (for at least 20 seconds)
- Wash all equipment (nipples, bottles, rings, and caps) in hot soapy water and scrub, using bottle and nipple brushes.
- Rinse all equipment well in hot water.
- Disinfect nipples, bottles, rings, and caps by boiling for 5 minutes in a pot with enough water to cover, and then remove with sanitized tongs, let cool, and air dry.
- If disposable plastic bottle liners are used: throw out the bag after one use; and clean and sterilize the nipples, rings, and caps, as described above.
- Wash the formula can lid with soap and water before you open it.
- Prepare the formula properly according to directions on the formula container. ****Do not "water down" the formula to make it last as infants cannot process watery**

formula or extra water in their diet. Formulas have been designed to give babies the right nutrients and water content.

- Put a clean nipple right side up on each bottle and cover with a nipple cap.
- Do not put cereal or other food in a bottle because this interferes with the baby's natural ability to obtain the right amount of calories, forces the baby to eat cereal, and may cause the baby to choke. Feeding cereal does not affect baby's ability to sleep.
- Hold your baby when feeding to bond with your child and stimulate their senses for proper development.

Learning how to properly prepare formula is important to the health of your child. A few simple steps can keep your child healthy.

Resources

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