

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

INFANT FORMULA

Here is important and basic information about preparing and storing infant formula safely. For premature or immunocompromised (sick) babies, talk to your baby's health care provider.

COMBINING BREASTFEEDING AND FORMULA

- If your breastfed baby needs more milk, offer expressed breastmilk. The more milk you remove from your breasts, the more your body will produce
- Speak to a health care provider if you need support to increase your milk supply
- If you are combining breastmilk and formula, give your baby a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU each day

FORMULA OPTIONS

- Ready-to-feed or liquid concentrate formula are sterile and have less risk for bacteria growth compared to powdered formula, but cost more
- Any basic commercial formula, from birth to 12 months, is acceptable
- Follow-up, second stage or formulas with special ingredients are not needed
- Specialty formulas (soy, lactose-free, hypoallergenic or thickened) are rarely needed. Talk to your baby's health care provider if you choose a low iron or specialty formula
- Homemade formula is unsafe and does not meet your baby's nutritional needs

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/feedingkids

- Avoid imported formula as it may not meet strict Canadian manufacturing guidelines
- Cow or goat milks, vegetarian beverages (soy, rice or almond), evaporated milks or toddler milks are not formula substitutes
- If you feed formula only, extra vitamin D is not needed since it is added to formula
- Sign up for food recall alerts by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at inspection.gc.ca/stayconnected

STORING FORMULA CONTAINERS

- Use before the "best before" date
- Store unopened containers in a cool, dry place and avoid direct sunlight or freezing
- Refrigerate opened liquid containers for up to 48 hours
- To store opened powdered formula containers, see package instructions

WATER SAFETY

- Use cold municipal tap water or commercial bottled water
- Do not use carbonated, distilled, mineral or softened water
- Test well water for bacteria, chemicals (nitrates) and fluoride level. Testing is offered by York Region Public Health for free or at a private lab, at a fee
- Bring water to a rolling boil for two minutes

in a pot or a stovetop kettle (electric kettles do not keep water at a rolling boil)

- Once cooled, store it in a tightly closed, sterilized container for up to 24 hours at room temperature or 48 to 72 hours in the fridge

Water temperature for powdered formula when preparing bottle(s) for later use

- Only use boiled water that has cooled to no less 70°C / 158°F (after the water is boiled, let the pot sit for no more than 30 minutes or use a food grade thermometer). This is to lower the risk of bacterial growth
- Do not use automatic formula dispensers. The water is not heated to 70°C / 158°F

GETTING STARTED

- Always start by washing your hands and cleaning the counter top or surface
- Use glass or BPA-free bottles and nipples with no cracks, stains or loose pieces
- Wash and rinse all equipment (e.g. cup, syringe, bottles, nipples, spoon or tongs) after each use. To sterilize, fully cover equipment in a full pot of water at a rolling boil for two minutes. Drain and air-dry in the pot or on a clean cloth. Cover for later use
- If you use a commercial sterilizer, follow the company's instructions

PREPARING FORMULA

- Follow the instructions carefully. Mixing it incorrectly can make your baby sick
- While it is best to make one bottle at a time and feed baby right away, prepared formula can be stored in the fridge for up to 24 hours

Ready-to-feed formula

- Pour the desired amount of formula into the bottle. Do not add water

Liquid concentrate formula

- 1) Pour and measure the water in the bottle
- 2) Add an equal amount of formula

Powdered formula

- 1) Pour and measure the water in the bottle
- 2) Add the correct number of leveled scoops of powder. Use the scoop provided
- 3) Mix (shake or stir) until there are no lumps

WARMING FORMULA IS OPTIONAL

- Place the bottle under warm running water, in a bowl of warm water or in an electric bottle warmer on a low setting
- Do not use a microwave as it can cause "hot spots" and burn your baby's mouth
- Warm formula no longer than 15 minutes
- Check the temperature by placing a small amount on the inside of your wrist. It should feel room or body temperature

OFFERING YOUR BABY FORMULA

- Always trust your baby to know when and how much to drink
- Keep baby calm and relaxed while [bottle feeding](#). If they cough, dribble milk, bring their hands to their face or work hard to catch their breath, the flow may be too fast
- Throw away any unused formula sitting at room temperature within two hours
- Do not place formula back into the fridge once you have offered it
- After each feeding or at least twice a day, wipe baby's gums, insides of cheeks and roof of the mouth with a clean, soft, damp cloth. Once teeth appear, gently brush with a small, soft toothbrush and water

FOR INFORMATION ON FEEDING BABIES

Call Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 to talk to a Public Health Nurse or visit:

- york.ca/feedingkids
- york.ca/breastfeeding
- en.beststart.org/for_parents

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