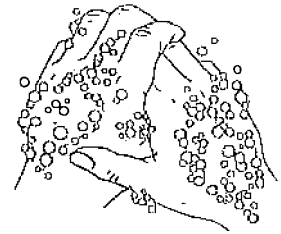


Bottle Feeding Your Baby

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends human milk or an iron-fortified commercial infant formula for your baby's first year of life. You may choose to bottle feed, or need a formula supplement while you are breastfeeding. Regardless of your feeding choice, your infant will benefit most if mealtimes are full of cuddling and love.

Getting Started

- Wash your hands well with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer before feeding your child or handling formula.
- Feed your baby when he or she shows signs of hunger. This may be every 3 to 4 hours. If your baby sleeps for longer than a four hour period during the day, then wake your baby for feedings. Plan to feed your baby at least 6 to 8 times in 24 hours.
- Do not worry if your baby takes only 1 ounce of formula at each feeding during the first few days. Your baby will slowly take a more formula as he or she grows. By the end of the first week, your baby should eat at least 1 to 3 ounces at each feeding.
- Relax, sit down and make yourself comfortable. Hold your baby in a semi-upright position while feeding.
- To get your baby's attention, stroke the cheek with your finger or with the tip of the bottle's nipple. Your baby's head will turn and the mouth will open in response to the stroking. When you place the nipple in your baby's mouth, your baby should begin sucking.
- Hold the bottle at an incline so the nipple fills completely with formula. This will help prevent your baby from swallowing air.



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- If the baby is working too hard, tires easily or becomes frustrated, the hole in the nipple may be too small. If your baby gulps air or formula leaks out of the corners of the mouth the hole may be too large. To test the nipple, turn the bottle upside down. Formula should drip about 1 drop a second.
- About halfway through each feeding, stop and burp your baby. You also may try burping if your baby wants to stop eating too soon. Burping helps your baby get rid of the extra air in her or his stomach. The air causes a baby to feel full and uncomfortable. Spitting up a small amount of formula is normal and often happens at feeding time. (See the handout **How to Burp to Burp Your Baby.**)
- Allow your baby to decide when he or she has had enough to eat. Do not force your baby to finish a bottle. Towards the end of a feeding, the baby may fall into a light sleep. You may still notice some sucking movements. This is just a reflex and does not mean that the baby is still hungry. Let your baby suck on your finger or a pacifier.



Feeding time should be pleasant for both you and your baby. Hold your baby close and talk softly during the feeding. Skin to skin contact also will help you feel closer to your baby. This can be done by wearing short sleeves or partially undressing yourself and your baby. Your baby will enjoy the warmth and feel of your skin.

Common Questions about Formula:

How long will my baby need formula?

Usually babies need to drink formula for the first year of life. Avoid adding anything to the formula including honey, sugar, cow's milk or cereal. Your baby will give you information when to start solid foods and cow's milk.

What kind of formula should I give my baby?

Talk to your baby's doctor about which formula is best for your baby. Formula comes in different forms. Here is some information on the ways formula is packaged and how to mix it. Also, check the expiration date on the label of the formula. It is not safe to give you baby expired formula.

- **Ready-to-Use Formula**

This type of formula comes in ready-to-feed 4 ounce bottles or cans of different sizes. If you buy the cans, pour the formula into a sterilized bottle. Place a sterilized nipple on the bottle after filling. Ready-to-use bottles do not come with a nipple. You will need to use your own sterilized nipple. This type of formula is the most expensive.

- **Concentrate**

Concentrate will cost you less but you must read the mixing directions on the label. Mix the concentrate with equal amounts of water. For example, if you want 4 ounces of formula use 2 ounces of concentrate and 2 ounces of water. You will need sterilized bottles ready to fill after mixing the formula. Use a sterile nipple for feedings.

- **Powder**

The least expensive type of formula is powder, but it takes the most time to prepare. Mix 1 scoop of powder with every 2 ounces of water. For example, if you need to make 4 ounces of formula, use 4 ounces of water and add 2 scoops of formula. You will need sterilized bottles ready to fill after mixing the formula. This kind of ready-to-mix formula comes in cans or single-serve packets.

Can I use tap water to mix formula?

Yes, most pediatricians advise that you can use city tap water. Check with your baby's doctor to ask if boiling the water is necessary.

How long should I refrigerate formula after mixing it?

Use refrigerated formula within 24 to 48 hours of mixing. For your baby's safety, throw away unused formula after 48 hours.

Can I change formula if my baby does not like it?

Treat formula like a medicine. Call your baby's doctor for advice on changing the brand of formula. Do not change the brand because you have seen an advertisement or have a coupon for a different brand. If you think your baby does not like the formula or your baby has problems digesting it, **call your baby's doctor.**

Common signs to watch for when babies have problems with formula:

- Vomiting right after the feedings
- Recurring diarrhea or constipation
- Frequent bouts of crying after feedings
- Signs of colic with a firm, enlarged and tender tummy right after a feeding
- Fussy behavior and/or frequent night waking
- A rash, rash on the face and around the rectum (opening for bowel movements)
- Frequent colds and/or ear infections

Talk to your baby's doctor if you see any of these signs.

What type of bottles and nipples should I use to feed my baby?

No one type of bottle or nipple is better than another. You and your baby are the best judges. Here is some information to help you decide which type of bottles and nipples to use.

- **Bottles**

There are 2 types of bottles: glass bottles and plastic bottles. Some bottles use plastic liners. You may know them as the Playtex Nurser®. The plastic liners collapse while the baby feeds decreasing the amount of swallowed air.



The newest type of bottle is the Johnson & Johnson Healthflow®. This plastic bottle has a bend in the middle. The bend in this bottle fills the nipple completely with formula and helps prevent your baby from swallowing air during feedings. This reduces the amount of air swallowed.



- **Nipples**

Nipples come in many shapes and with different hole sizes. Shapes include the standard, natural shape (orthodontic), and expandable nubbin. The nubbin nipple is for use on plastic bottles with collapsible plastic liners.

Small nipple holes are for newborns drinking formula. Larger nipple holes are for older babies. Nipples made from silicone are the easiest to clean, do not get gummy, and do not taste rubbery.



Do I need to sterilize bottles and nipples?

Most health care providers recommend sterilizing bottles and nipples by placing them on the top rack of your dishwasher. If a dishwasher is not available, check with your health care provider on sterilizing bottles and nipples. Please read the handout **How to Sterilize Baby Bottles and Nipples** for more information.

Should I give my baby water or other fluids?

If your baby is getting enough to eat, you do not need to give your baby any other fluids like water or juice unless advised by your baby's health care provider. Extra water may be needed when your baby is older and eating solid food or during warm summer months.

How will I know my baby is getting enough to eat?

Ask yourself these questions if you are not sure:

- Does your baby suck and swallow without gagging or choking during feeding?
- Does your baby have 6 or more wet diapers over a 24-hour period?
- Does your baby have a bowel movement or dirty diaper every day?
- Is your baby sleeping between feedings?
- Is your baby gaining weight and filling out his/her baby clothes?

If you answer yes to these questions, you can be sure your baby is getting enough to eat. **If not, talk to your baby's doctor right away.**

What is the safest way to heat a bottle of formula?

- The safest way to heat a bottle of formula is to run warm water over it or to place it in a pan of warm water. Use the formula right after you have heated it.
- **Do not** place a bottle in a pan of water on the stove and bring it to a boil. This destroys the protein in the formula and makes it too hot for your baby to drink.
Do not microwave formula. Microwaving causes uneven heating. The bottle may feel cool to you, but the formula inside can be very hot and burn your baby.
- Always check the temperature first before giving a bottle to your baby. Shake a few drops on your inner arm. The formula is ready when it no longer feels cold.

Other Safety Tips

- Do not let the baby take a bottle of formula lying flat. Feeding a baby in this position increases the chance of ear infections and choking. Decay of baby teeth and jaw problems are also common if you feed in this position.
- Never lay a baby down with a propped bottle. Propped bottles increase the risk of choking.
- Know how to use a bulb syringe. Sometimes babies choke when you are feeding them. Your nurse will show how, to use the bulb syringe to suction your baby's mouth and/or nose.
- Discard any formula left in the bottle after a feeding. Formula spoils easily once bacteria from the baby's mouth backwashes into the bottle. If the baby does not finish the leftover formula within 3 hours, throw it away.
- Do not give your baby homemade formula. Formula made from cow's milk (fresh or evaporated) does not have the same nutrients as commercially made formula. Babies cannot digest cow's milk.

Enjoy your feeding time together. Relax and let your baby learn that feeding time is a pleasant time.

Infant's Daily Bottle-feeding Diary

Date _____

Infant's Age _____

Time	Feedings	Diaper		Type	Notes
	How Much Formula Given	Wet	Stool .	Formula	
1 st					
2 nd					
3 rd					
4 th					
5 th					
6 th					
7 th					
8 th					
9 th					
10 th					
11 th					
12 th					

Questions to doctor: _____

Infant's Daily Bottle-feeding Diary

Date _____

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6 th					
7 th					
8 th					
9 th					
10 th					
11 th					
12 th					

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Child Birth Center

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