

Infant Formula with Iron

Breastfeeding is the healthiest way to feed your baby. Giving infant formula to a breastfed baby will reduce your breastmilk supply. If your baby cannot be breastfed, or fed expressed breastmilk, commercial formulas are recommended for up to the first year of life. This information will help you feed your healthy full term baby. Premature or ill babies may need special feeding and you should speak to a health care professional.

About Infant Formula with iron:

- Always buy infant formula with iron. It may be labeled “iron fortified” or “with iron.” Iron helps to keep your baby’s blood healthy.
- Always check the expiry date. The expiry date may be printed on the top, bottom or on the sides of the container. Expired infant formula will not give your baby all the nutrients needed to stay healthy.
- Always check the label for the type of infant formula you are buying for your baby. The three forms of infant formulas are:
 - ready-to-use
 - concentrated liquid
 - powder – not a sterile product; not recommended (unless prescribed) for babies under two months of age who are premature have a low birth weight, or babies with a weakened immune system.

How long to use infant formula with iron:

Plan to use infant formula until your baby is between nine months and one year old.

Do Not Use:

Whole (homogenized/homo) milk

- Whole cow’s milk is not recommended until nine months to one year of age.
- Check with your health care provider before giving your baby whole milk.
- Whole milk only has a trace of iron. Iron is important for babies to be healthy.
- Whole milk may be added only if your baby is eating sources of iron from foods such as iron-fortified infant cereal, chicken, pork, beef, wild meat, eggs or legumes.
- Limit whole milk to a maximum of 24 oz (720 ml) per day.
- Unpasteurized cow’s milk is not safe for babies.

Other milks or vegetarian beverages:

- Skim, 1% and 2% milk do not provide enough energy for your baby to grow and should not be given to infants until at least two years of age. 2% milk can be given at two years of age.
- Soy beverages or rice beverages should not be used because they may not contain enough protein, calories, minerals or vitamins to help your baby grow.
- Goat’s milk does not have enough iron or folic acid (folate). Check with your health care provider before giving your baby whole goat’s milk.
- Evaporated milk should not be used as an infant formula. It is missing iron and vitamins that your baby needs.

Preparation:

- Follow the directions on the container when preparing ready-to-use, concentrated liquid or powder formula for your baby. Never add extra formula, water or cereal.

Clean and Sterilize:

- For infants younger than four months of age, sterilize bottles, nipples, lids, measuring cups and mixing jugs. For older infants, use hot soapy water and rinse with hot water (that is safe for drinking) to clean all feeding and preparation equipment.
- Wash your hands with soap and water. Clean and disinfect the surface where you will prepare the formula.

To sterilize equipment: Place all equipment in a pot of water. The water should completely cover everything in the pot. Cover the pot and bring water to a boil. Continue boiling for two minutes. Let cool and remove the equipment with sterilized tongs.

Preparing water:

- Use water from the cold water tap. Water from the hot water tap may have high amounts of lead from the hot water tank which is not healthy for your baby.
- If well water is used, it should be tested to ensure it meets current Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality.
- **Concentrated liquid:** For babies under four months of age, water should be brought to a rolling boil in a clean covered container for two minutes.
 - This water may be used to prepare formula once it has cooled to between room and body temperature (20-37°C) or the water may be refrigerated for later use.
 - Boiled water can be stored in a covered sterilized container at room temperature for 24 hours or in the fridge for 2-3 days.
- **Powder:** Powdered formula may contain harmful bacteria. Proper preparation and storage is very important to destroy harmful bacteria.
 - For all babies, water should be brought to a rolling boil in a clean covered container for two minutes.
 - If you are preparing water to mix with powder just before feeding your baby, let the water cool to between room and body temperature (20-37°C).
 - If you are preparing bottles to refrigerate and use later, cool the water to 70°C. One litre (4 cups) of water cooled at room temperature for 30 minutes will be at 70°C. This water will still be hot enough to destroy harmful bacteria.



Making formula:

- Always use a clean bottle for each feeding.
- It is best to prepare bottles as you need them.
- **Powder:**
 - If you are feeding your baby right away, mix the powder with previously boiled water that is between room and body temperature.
 - If you are preparing bottles to refrigerate and use later, see the section above for instructions on preparing the water.
- Quickly cool formula by placing in a container of cold or ice water. Before feeding, check the temperature of the formula on the inside of your arm so you do not burn your baby.

Storing formula:

- Do not leave prepared infant formula at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Throw away any formula your baby did not drink.
- Do not leave prepared infant formula in the fridge for more than 24 hours.

Warming formula:

- Place bottle in a bowl of warm water.
- Never heat a bottle in the microwave because the heat is uneven and can cause “hot spots” that could burn your baby’s mouth.

Transporting formula:

- When travelling, hot formula needs to be cooled in a refrigerator first. Transport prepared formula in a cooler bag with ice packs and use it within two hours.
- For powdered formula, boil and cool the water to room temperature in advance and transport the water and powder separately. When your baby is hungry, mix the appropriate amount of formula with water and feed right away.

Feeding your baby:

- At first, baby’s only food should be infant formula with added iron.
- Your baby may become hungrier during growth spurts so feed your baby on demand, or more often if needed. Growth spurts usually occur when baby is two to three weeks, six weeks, three months and six months of age.
- Wait until six months to give solid foods. Never add infant cereal to baby’s bottle.
- Feed your baby when she wants to eat, when she’s wide awake and calm. Adapt your schedule to suit her needs and avoid feeding when she is drowsy or upset.
- Let her eat as much or as little as she wants at her own pace.

How often should you feed your baby?

Signs that your baby is hungry:

Watch your baby for these signs and you will be able to feed your baby before she starts to cry or fuss.

- Eyes are wide and face bright
- Looks at your face
- Smiles
- Moves towards you
- Turns toward bottle when cheek is touched
- Sucks on her fingers or hands
- Clicks or sucks on her tongue
- Opens her mouth

Signs that your baby is full:

- Stops sucking on nipple and may turn head away
- Feels settled and relaxed
- Arms and legs stretched out
- Fingers spread out

How to know your baby is feeding well:

- Your baby is feeding at least eight times in 24 hours.
- After the first week, your baby has six wet diapers and three soiled diapers every 24 hours.
- Your baby gains four to eight ounces (120-240 g) or more per week in the first three months.
- Your baby regains her birth weight by two weeks of age.
- If you have feeding concerns (If poop is hard or very runny, or you think your baby is constipated or has diarrhea), call your health provider,

Holding your baby while you bottle feed:

- Cuddle or hold your baby close while feeding.
- Support the baby so that her head, back and shoulders are in a straight line. Look at her face as you are feeding her. Tip the bottle to keep the nipple filled. Avoid letting your baby suck on an empty nipple.
- Alternate the arm you use to hold your baby. This will encourage her to use both eyes and to develop eye contact with you.
- Avoid propping the bottle.
- Encourage her to open her mouth by touching her cheek or lips while showing her the nipple.
- Wait for her to open her mouth for the nipple.
- Sit quietly during the feeding. Keep the feeding smooth and steady.
- Wait until she is finished the feeding to wipe, burp or play.
- Talk quietly and pleasantly to her, or touch her in a way that she likes to help her stay awake.
- Talk or play a while after the feeding. Put her to bed when she's calm and drowsy.



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