

FORMULA FEEDING



INFORMATION TO SUPPORT FORMULA FEEDING

You may decide to feed your baby formula milk, rather than breastmilk. What is most important is that you and your baby are happy with whatever decision you make.

Infant formula can provide your baby with the nutrients they need to grow up until around 6 months of age. At around 6 months, you can offer your baby solid foods, in addition to formula. You can also start to replace the bottle with a cup.

Which formula should you choose?

Unless your GP or Child and Family Health Nurse (CFHN) advises you otherwise, infant cow's milk formula labelled 'suitable from birth' or 'stage 1' is suitable for most babies up to 12 months of age.

Choose a formula with a low protein level. Less than 1.3 grams protein/100mL formula is best.

Once your baby has reached 12 months, you can replace formula with regular full-fat cow's milk in a cup. If you need support with infant formula feeding, ask your midwife, GP or CFHN for information and help.

How much infant formula does my baby need?

All babies need different amounts at different times.

Below are amounts to offer each day as a guide for healthy term infants:

Day 1-4

Start offering 30 – 60 mL/kg/day and increase over the next few days

Day 5- 3 months

150 mL/kg/day + some babies who are preterm, will require up to 180 – 200 mL/kg/day

3-6 months

120ml/kg/day

6-12 months

100 mL/kg/day + some babies may reduce to 90mL/kg/day

Remember, this is only a guide. The amount of formula recommended on formula tins is also only a guide and does not suit every baby. Your baby will drink as much as they need, which may not always be a full bottle. Do not pressure your baby to finish or empty their bottle. It is important to follow their hunger and fullness signs.

BABY FEEDING CUES/SIGNS

Early cues - "I'm hungry"



Stirring



Mouth opening



*Turning head/
seeking/rooting*

Mid cues - "I'm really hungry"



Stretching



*Increasing
movement*



Hand to mouth

Late cues - "Calm me, then feed me"



Crying



*Agitated
body movements*



*Colour
turning red*



Scan the QR code to watch a short video about how to respond to your baby's hunger and fullness cues.

CUP OR BOTTLE FEEDING

It is important that you interact with your baby when cup or bottle feeding. Always hold your baby during feeding, so you can bond, cuddle, talk and see they are fed safely. A bottle may take about 20-30 minutes of sucking time for the baby to feel satisfied.

For safe feeding:

- Hold your baby upright for feeds while supporting their head
- Wait for your baby to accept the teat by opening their mouth
- Never leave your baby alone with a bottle. Babies who are fed with a bottle in bed or with a bottle propped up by a blanket or cushion are in danger of choking, ear infection and tooth decay
- Offer them short breaks during the feed to give the baby a rest so you can see if they are still hungry or full

Your baby may need a break from bottle feeding if they:

- Spread their toes and fingers
- Turn their head away from the bottle
- Push the bottle away
- Have milk spilling out of their mouth during feeding

During this time, you can burp them or give them a rest from feeding. After a short break, you can offer the bottle again. Your baby might want to feed again or they may tell you they are full.

PREPARING INFANT FORMULA

Prepare formula in a clean place.

1. Wash your hands with soap and water and dry thoroughly.
2. Wash and sterilise all equipment including bottles, teats and a knife to measure formula
 - Option for sterilisation: boil for 5 minutes, or use anti-bacterial sterilising agents, steam sterilisers or microwave steam sterilisers.
3. It is best to make up one bottle at a time.
 - Use freshly boiled tap water that has been cooled to lukewarm or room temperature.
 - Don't re-boil the water as it increases the amount of salt in the water.
 - Measure the amount of water needed in the bottle. Always add the water before the powder.
4. Measure the required number of scoops of infant formula powder into the bottle of water.
5. Only use the scoop that comes with that tin.
6. Follow instructions to see how many scoops are needed for the amount of water.
7. Tap each scoop lightly and use a sterilised knife to level the scoop.
8. Re-seal the opened infant formula powder can and store in a dry place.
9. Do not add extra formula powder or foods, such as honey, cereal or biscuits, into the bottle. Do not dip bottle teats in honey or other sweet foods.
5. Place the cap on the bottle and shake until the powder dissolves.
6. Test the temperature of the formula on the inside of your wrist before feeding it to your baby – it should feel warm, not hot.
 - Never use a microwave oven to heat the bottle. Bottles heated in microwaves can burn your baby's mouth.
7. Throw away any made up formula left after a feed or that has been kept at room temperature for 1 hour or more.



Safety tips

- Check the use by dates on formula tins
- Throw away open formula tins after 1 month
- Always prepare formula according to the instructions on the tin.
 - Formula made with too much or too little water or formula powder can cause growing problems for your baby.
 - Formula that is not made at the correct temperature, or bottles and teats that have not been properly sterilised, can have germs that make your baby sick.