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Baby Formula: Choosing, Introducing, & More

Choosing a feeding method can weigh on any parent's mind—so here's what you can consider when it comes to meeting your baby's nutrition needs.

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Baby Formula: Choosing, Introducing, & More

Choosing a feeding method can weigh on any parent's mind—so here's what you can consider when it comes to meeting your baby's nutrition needs.

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Health Canada recommends ^[6] that, for the nutrition, immunologic protection, growth, and development of infants and toddlers, you breastfeed exclusively for the first six months and you sustain it for up to two years or longer with appropriate complementary feeding.^{1,2}

If you need help breastfeeding, healthcare professionals, family and friends can often provide support, encouragement and advice during this period of learning to feed your new baby.

There are a variety of reasons you may choose to supplement breast milk with formula, like: Baby's weight isn't quite where the doctors want to see it, Mommy's milk is taking time to come in, or on rare occasions, health concerns mean you've been advised to avoid providing breast milk in order to protect your baby.

Here's some help understanding your formula choices so you can determine what's best for you and your baby.

The facts

- Unlike regular cow's milk, infant formulas contain the recommended amounts of **protein, carbohydrate, fat, vitamins and minerals required** for baby's healthy growth & development.
- Healthcare professionals recommend **iron-fortified formula** because it offers a complete source of nutrition for your baby during the first year.^{1,2}
- All infant formulas in Canada meet strict nutritional standards, but **not all formulas are the same.**
- **100% whey, partially hydrolyzed protein** is a type of cow's milk protein that has been partially broken down into smaller pieces.
- Hospitals don't carry all infant formula brands (so **consider all of your feeding options** before you deliver your baby).

Look for a formula with the benefits of probiotics and DHA

Scientific advancements have made infant formulas better than ever—consider choosing a formula that contains:

- **Probiotic *B. lactis*:** Probiotics are part of what gives breast milk its natural protective qualities. Probiotic formula contains *B. lactis*, which contributes to baby's healthy gut flora.
- **DHA and ARA:** DHA and ARA contribute to your baby's normal physical brain and eye development.

Formats

Infant formula comes in three different formats and you can choose one, two or all three for your baby—whatever your daily routine can handle!

Ready-to-Feed Formula

- New to formula? This easy-to-use format was made for your convenience.
- Comes in a ready-to-use sterile nurser form (Attach nipple. Warm*. Feed!)
- Do not mix with additional water.**

Concentrate Formula

- "Add Water" concentrated liquid infant formula is easy to use and prepare for added convenience
- Requires additional amount of sterilized water**
- Mixes easily (No clumps or scoops!)

Powder Formula

- Convenient
- Cost-effective
- Requires powder be added to desired amount of sterilized water**

Still haven't gotten your fill? [Learn more about infant formulas here](#) [8].

Introducing Infant Formula: Step-by-Step

Follow these simple instructions to **supplement breastfeeding with formula or transition to formula feeding**:

1. Substitute one mid-day breastfeeding with a bottle-feeding. Relieve your breasts between feedings by expressing small amounts of milk (only if necessary).
2. Talk soothingly when you offer the bottle and give extra loving attention.
3. Substitute another breastfeeding with bottle-feeding every 2-3 days until you reach your desired balance between breastfeeding and bottle-feeding.

Some Additional Thoughts on Transitioning

- Do not replace two consecutive feedings on the same day when you first begin weaning.
- If you continue with breastfeeding in the morning and evening, or leave them as your last substitutions, you will have greater flexibility to return to work or share daytime feedings with others.
- The transition to formula may happen smoothly, but sometimes it takes a little longer. (No worries!)

All babies and moms are different, so try to be patient, relax and enjoy your time together.

* Do not use a microwave oven to warm formula, as it can produce hot spots in the bottle that can burn your baby.

** Your baby's health depends on carefully following the label directions for preparation and use.

References:

¹ Joint statement of Health Canada, Canadian Paediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, and Breastfeeding Committee for Canada. Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants: Recommendations from Birth to Six Months. 2012. <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/infant-nourisson/recom/index-eng.php> [9]

² Joint statement of Health Canada, Canadian Paediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, and Breastfeeding Committee for Canada. Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants: Recommendations from Six to 24 Months. 2014. <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/infant-nourisson/recom/recom-6-24...> [10]

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