

FORMULA FEEDING

Dear New Parent,

Thank you for letting us be a part of your first days with your baby. Our job is to give you good information and support so that you can meet your parenting goals. The purpose of this handout is to inform you about the risks of feeding your baby formula. And, if you decide to feed formula, this handout will give you the information you need to do so safely.

With thanks,

Your doctors and nurses

RISKS OF FORMULA

- Breastfeeding is the safest, healthiest way to feed a baby. It can be difficult to learn how to breastfeed, but our staff is here to help you.
- Infant formula is NOT sterile. The bacteria found in powdered formula is especially dangerous for premies. Following the steps in this handout can reduce the risk of infection from formula. The only way to avoid the risk is to exclusively breastfeed.

PREPARING A BOTTLE

- Hygiene: Wash your hands with soap and water. Disinfect the surface you will use to prepare the bottle. Rinse and dry the formula container.
- Clean Utensils: Wash bottles, nipples and any other utensils with soap, water, and bottle brush. Sterilize in boiling water for 5 minutes. You may use a bottle sterilizer if you have one.
- Boil enough fresh, cold tap water for the amount of formula you plan to prepare for one minute. Let the water cool for no longer than 30 minutes. In order to kill bacteria in the powdered formula, the water must be no cooler than 158°F (70°C).



MIXING THE FORMULA

- Check the container to make sure the expiration date has not passed. You may also wish to check for recalls at www.foodsafety.gov/recalls.
- Read the instructions on the formula package to find out how much water and powder you need.
- Being careful not to burn yourself, pour the correct amount of boiled and cooled water into the sterilized bottle. Add the exact amount of powdered formula to the water in the bottle. Adding too much or too little can make your baby sick.
- Place the nipple, ring and top on the bottle. Shake the bottle to mix the formula and water thoroughly.





- With the top still on, hold the bottle under cool tap water to cool the bottle temperature. Or, you can place it in a bowl of ice water. Check the temperature by dripping a little bit on the inside of your wrist. It should feel warm, not hot. If it is too warm, cool it more under the cool water or ice bath. When it is cool, dry the outside of the bottle with a clean cloth.
- Throw away any formula that has not been eaten within two hours of preparation if it sat at room temperature.
- After feeding begins, use formula or discard within one hour.

MAKING AND STORING FORMULA FOR LATER USE

- If you must prepare feeds in advance, be sure to place the prepared bottles in a refrigerator immediately. The refrigerator must be 35-40°F. Throw away refrigerated formula that has not been used within 24 hours.
- Re-warm formula within 15 minutes of taking it out of the refrigerator. You can re-warm it by putting the bottle in a cup of warm water, shaking occasionally for even temperature.
- Just like fresh bottles, throw away any unused feed within two hours of removing it from the refrigerator.
- Follow instructions on the container about how to store unused formula.

NEVER use a microwave to prepare or re-warm baby formula bottles. Microwaves heat the formula unevenly. This may cause a "hot spot" that could badly burn the baby's mouth.

FEEDING FROM A BOTTLE

- Hold your baby close. Feeding is an opportunity to slow down and bond.
- Hold your baby so the head is higher than the chest. This way, baby can swallow safely.
- Follow baby's cues. Your baby may want to drink slower or faster.
- Let baby stop sucking often. It is normal to take breaks during a meal. Burp the baby during and after every feeding.
- When babies are full, they may turn their heads away, fall asleep, or stop sucking. Respect these signs. Never force baby to finish the bottle.
- Never prop a baby bottle. Never leave a bottle in bed with a baby. Never leave a baby alone with a bottle. They may choke, spit up, get ear infections, and even rot their teeth.



WOMEN-INSPIRED SYSTEMS ENRICHMENT

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