

PREPARING YOUR INFANT'S FORMULA SAFELY

Safe preparation of infant formula is important for your baby's health. Following the steps below will help to protect your baby against disease-causing bacteria.

Check the expiration date

Look for an expiration or "use by" date on the formula container. Don't buy or use outdated infant formula. If the expiration date has passed, discard the formula.

Wash your hands

Before preparing formula, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Dry your hands well.

Prepare your bottle

Sterilize bottles, nipples, caps and rings before using them for the first time. You can boil the bottle and accessories in water for five minutes, use a microwave steam sterilizer bag or use a stand-alone electric steam sterilizer.

After the first use, there's no need to sterilize your bottle and accessories. Wash these items with soap and water and allow them to air-dry or use a dishwasher. Bottle and nipple brushes can help you clean nooks and crannies.



Add water to liquid-concentrate or powdered formula

If you're using liquid-concentrate or powdered formula, you'll need to add water. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for how much water to use.

You can use any type of clean water — tap or bottled. If you use well water or you're concerned about the purity of your water supply, talk to the water department. Well water needs regular testing. To kill bacteria that might be present in water, use tap water that has been boiled for one minute and cooled quickly to body temperature, 98.6 F (37 C). Then, mix the water with formula.

If it has been determined that your baby is at a higher risk (less than two months old or born prematurely), consider taking extra steps when preparing powdered formula to protect them from the Cronobacter bacteria.

- Bring water to a boil.
- Let water cool for five minutes.
- Mix in powdered formula and shake well.
- Let prepared formula cool to body temperature or hold the capped bottle under cool water before feeding to your infant to avoid burning the baby's mouth.

Measure the formula

READY-TO-USE FORMULA:

- Shake the formula well.
- Pour enough formula for one feeding into a clean bottle.
- Don't add water or any other liquid.
- Attach the nipple and cap.

LIQUID-CONCENTRATE FORMULA:

- Shake the concentrated liquid before mixing it with water.
- Pour the appropriate amount of water for one serving into the bottle.
- Pour the amount of formula for one serving into the bottle.
- Attach the nipple and cap and shake well.

POWDERED FORMULA:

- Determine the amount of formula you want to prepare, following instructions on the package.
- Use a measuring cup to measure the amount of water needed and add the water to the bottle.
- Use the scoop that came with the formula container. Fill the scoop with powdered formula. Add the number of scoops needed.
- Pour the scoop or scoops into the bottle.
- Attach the nipple and cap and shake well.

Babies do not need water in addition to formula. Adding extra water to formula reduces the amount of nutrients baby will receive at each feeding. This can slow growth and development.

It's fine to give your baby room temperature or even cold formula. If your baby prefers warm formula place a filled bottle in a bowl of warm water and let it stand for a few minutes — or warm the bottle under running water. The formula should feel lukewarm — not hot.

Don't warm bottles in the microwave. The formula might heat unevenly, creating hot spots that could burn your baby's mouth.

(cdc.gov & fda.gov, 2022)

References: HealthyChildren.org. How to Safely Prepare Formula with Water. American Academy of Pediatrics WHO. (2007). Safe preparation, storage and handling of powdered infant formula: guidelines. <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/micro/pif2007/en>



Storing formula safely

Discard remaining formula at the end of each feeding if it has been more than an hour from the start of a feeding. Resist the urge to refrigerate a bottle once you have fed your baby from it, since bacteria from your baby's mouth can still multiply in the refrigerator.

An open container of ready-to-feed formula, concentrated formula, or formula prepared from concentrated formula, should be covered, refrigerated, and discarded after 24 hours if not used.

If you prepare and fill several bottles of liquid-concentrate or powdered formula at once:

- Label each bottle with the date that the formula was prepared.
- Refrigerate the extra bottles until you need them.
- Discard any prepared formula that's been in the refrigerator more than 24 hours.

Don't freeze formula, as it can cause the nutritional components to break down.



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