

Infant Formula: What You Need to Know

The World Health Organization, Health Canada, Dietitians of Canada and Canadian Paediatric Society recommend that babies be fed only breast milk for the first 6 months and continue breast milk feeding for up to two years and beyond, with the addition of solid foods.

Families may use formula for a variety of reasons. If you are thinking about feeding formula to your baby, talk to your health care provider or public health nurse. Here are some facts to consider:

POTENTIAL RISK WITH INFANT FEEDING

When babies don't receive breast milk, they have a higher risk for:

- Ear infections.
- Lung and breathing tract infections.
- Infectious diarrhea.
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Overweight and obesity.
- Type 2 diabetes.

When mothers don't give their own breast milk to their babies, mothers have a higher risk for:

- Abnormal bleeding after having a baby.
- Type 2 diabetes.
- Breast and ovarian cancer.

When babies don't receive breast milk, they can become sick from:

- Contaminated water.
- Formula manufacturing errors.
- Formula preparation mistakes.
- Improper storage of formula.
- Using things other than formula (for example condensed milk).

If you give your baby formula consider the following:

- How do you feel about giving formula to your baby now that you know the risks?
- Can you prepare and feed infant formula safely?
- Do you understand the costs of formula?
- Do you know that formula is needed for 9 to 12 months?

If you want more information on infant feeding, contact your public health unit or your health care provider.

Additional [tip sheets](#) and [a video](#) are available to assist you if you are considering or are using infant formula.

Video: [Infant Formula: What You Need To Know](#)

Tip Sheets

Tip Sheet #1 – [Informed Decision Making](#)

Tip Sheet #2 – [Getting Ready To Make Formula](#)

Tip Sheet #3 – [How To Prepare Ready-To-Feed Liquid Formula For Healthy Babies](#)

Tip Sheet #4 – [How To Prepare Concentrated Liquid Formula For Healthy Babies](#)

Tip Sheet #5 – [How To Prepare Powdered Formula For Healthy Babies](#)

Tip Sheet #6 – [How To Bottle Feed Your Baby And Transport Formula](#)



For information on how and when to feed your baby see:

- **[Infant Formula: What You Need To Know.](#)**