

## 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](#)

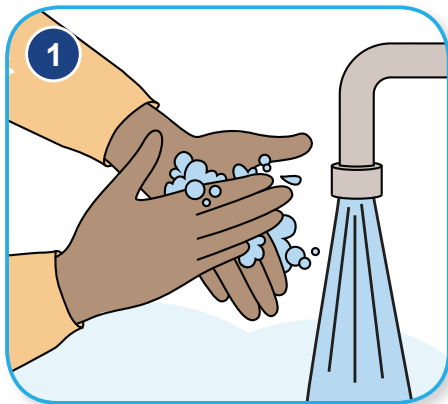


For information on how and when to feed your baby see:

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

For information on making an informed decision on how to feed your baby, talk to your health care provider or public health nurse. See [Tip Sheet #1](#) for important facts.

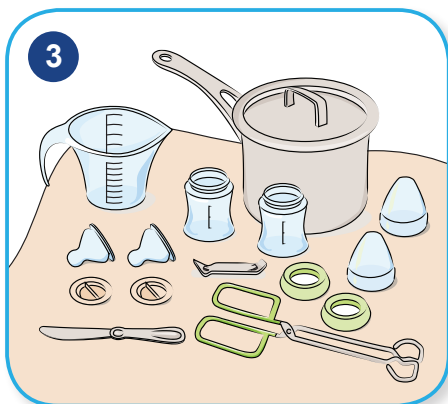
During COVID-19 plan ahead and buy 2 weeks of formula if you can.



Wash your hands with soap and water.



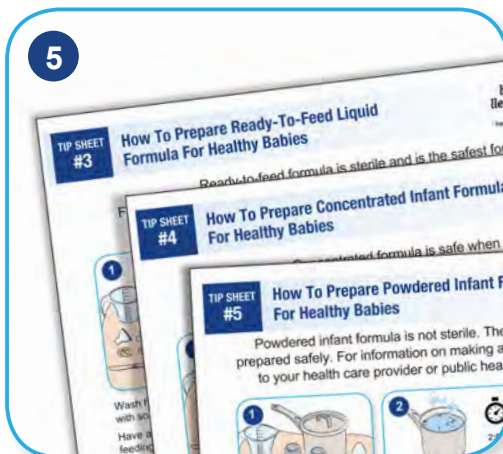
Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces including your counter.



You can find information on how to clean and sterilize your feeding equipment on [Tip Sheet #2](#).

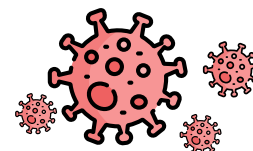


Wash the top of the formula container with soap and water.



Prepare formula by following the mixing directions on the can.

- See [Tip Sheet #3](#) – Ready-To-Feed
- See [Tip Sheet #4](#) – Concentrate
- See [Tip Sheet #5](#) – Powder



**If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you have it:**

Wear a face mask.  
Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces often.



Continued...

# Making Formula During COVID-19

6



Always follow instructions on the formula container when making formula.

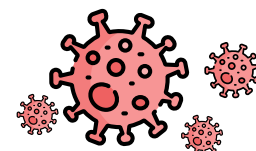
Do not dilute infant formula with extra water to make your supply last longer. This will not provide your baby with nutrition for healthy growth.

Homemade infant formula is not safe. Contact your health care provider or public health unit if you are having trouble feeding your baby.

7



Feed your baby by responding to their feeding cues (See [Tip Sheet #6](#)).



**If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you have it:**

Find a healthy adult to help you prepare, feed and care for your baby at home.

If you must feed your baby, **wash your hands** and **wear a mask** when holding your baby.

Children under the age of 2 should not wear a face mask.



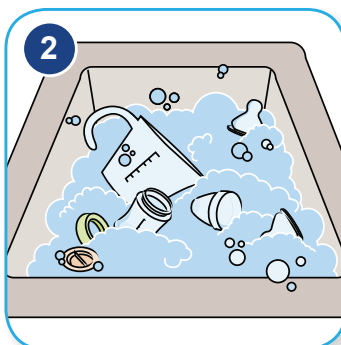
For more information see, [\*\*Infant Formula: What You Need To Know\*\*](#)



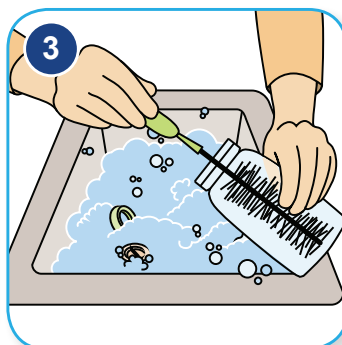
For information on making an informed decision on how to feed your baby talk to your health care provider or public health nurse. See [Tip Sheet #1](#) for important facts.



Wash hands and counter with soap and water.



Wash all bottles, nipples, rings, caps, discs, measuring cup, can opener, mixing utensils and tongs in hot soapy water in a clean sink.



Use a clean bottle brush to scrub the inside and outside of bottles and nipples.



Rinse well in safe water. These waters are safe once they are sterilized:

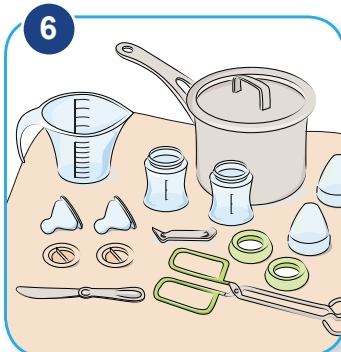
- Municipal tap water.
- Commercial bottled water (except carbonated, distilled or mineral waters).
- Well water that is tested regularly.

Safe water should always be used to prepare formula and sterilize feeding equipment. Set the bottles and feeding equipment to air dry on a clean towel.



To sterilize equipment, fill a large pot with water and add all the feeding equipment until covered.

Bring the water in the pot to a boil and let it boil for 2 minutes.



Use sterilized tongs to remove bottles and feeding equipment from the water.

Set the equipment to air dry on a clean towel. It is now ready to use.



### Sterilizing Water

Add water you will use to make formula to a pot.

Bring the water to a boil and boil for 2 minutes.



### Storing Sterilized Water

Extra sterilized water can be kept in a sterilized tightly closed glass container for 24 hours at room temperature or for 2-3 days in the fridge.



For more information see, [Infant Formula: What You Need To Know](#) pages 6-9:

- How to clean and sterilize bottle feeding equipment.
- How to sterilize water.
- How to ensure that you are using safe water.



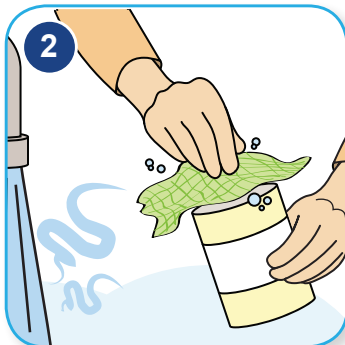
Ready-to-feed formula is sterile and is the safest formula.

For information on making an informed decision on how to feed your baby talk to your health care provider or public health nurse. See Tip Sheet #1 for important facts.



Wash hands and counter with soap and water.

Have all your sterile feeding equipment ready (See Tip Sheet #2).



Wash the top of the can or plastic formula container with hot water and soap.

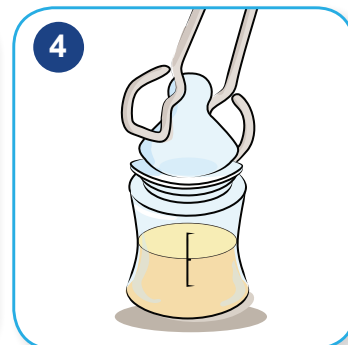
Check the expiry date on the can.

Shake the can well and open with a sterilized can opener.



Pour the formula directly into a clean and sterilized bottle.

Do not add water to ready-to-feed formula.



Pick up nipple, cap, and ring with sterilized tongs and put on bottle.

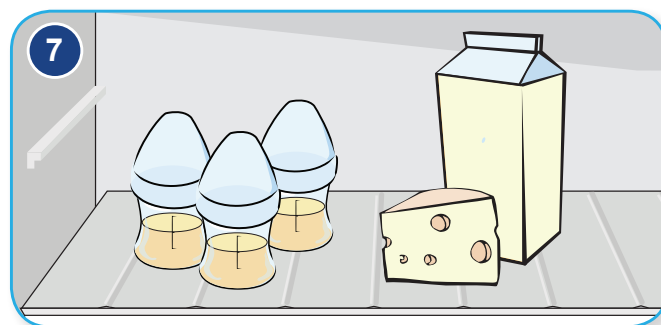


Tighten the ring with your hands.



Feed your baby in response to baby's feeding cues (See Tip Sheet #6).

Throw out formula that your baby doesn't drink after 2 hours.



It is safest to prepare a fresh bottle each time you feed your baby and to feed it immediately. If more than one bottle is prepared, place them in a refrigerator and use within 24 hours.

Opened cans of liquid infant formula should be covered, refrigerated immediately and can be stored for up to 48 hours in the refrigerator.

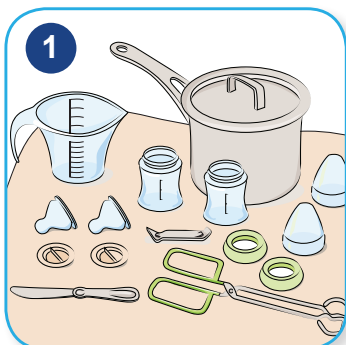


For information on how and when to feed your baby see:

- Pages 16-20 in the booklet **Infant Formula: What You Need To Know**.
- **Tip sheet #6**.
- **Infant formula can be recalled.** Recall information can be found on the Health Canada website at [www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/index-eng.php](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/index-eng.php).

Concentrated formula is safe when prepared correctly.

For information on making an informed decision on how to feed your baby talk to your health care provider or public health nurse. See Tip Sheet #1 for important facts.



Wash hands and counter with soap and water.

Have all your sterile feeding equipment ready (See Tip Sheet #2).



Wash the top of the can or plastic formula container with hot water and soap.

Check the expiry date on the can.

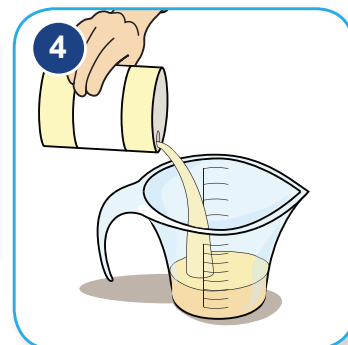
Shake the can well and open with a sterilized can opener.



See Tip Sheet #2 on how to sterilize the water used to make formula.

Read the label to see how much formula and water to use for one feed.

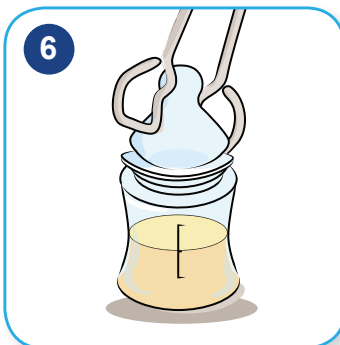
Pour and measure sterilized water that has been cooled down to room temperature into a sterilized bottle.



Measure an equal amount of formula for one feeding.



Add an equal amount of formula for one feeding into the sterilized bottle.



Use sterilized tongs to pick up nipple, ring and bottle cap.



Tighten the ring with your hands. Be careful not to touch the nipple with your hands.

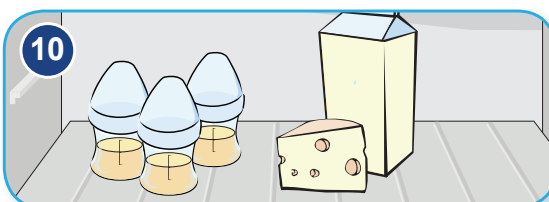


Mix by gently shaking the bottle.



Feed your baby in response to baby's feeding cues (See Tip Sheet #6).

Throw out formula that your baby doesn't drink after 2 hours.



It is safest to use a freshly prepared bottle each time you feed your baby. If you prepared the bottles with warm/hot water, cool the bottles quickly under cold running water or in a container of cold water. Once cooled, place them in a refrigerator and use within 24 hours.

Opened cans of liquid infant formula should be covered, refrigerated immediately and can be stored for up to 48 hours in the refrigerator.

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

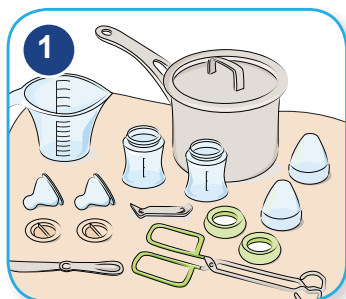
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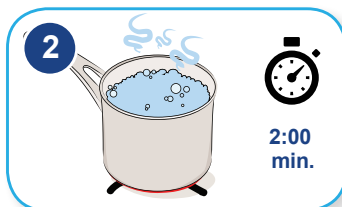


Powdered infant formula is not sterile. There is a higher risk of bacterial growth when not prepared safely. For information on making an informed decision on how to feed your baby talk to your health care provider or public health nurse. See Tip Sheet #1 for important facts.



Wash hands and counter with soap and water.

Have all your sterile feeding equipment ready (See Tip Sheet #2).

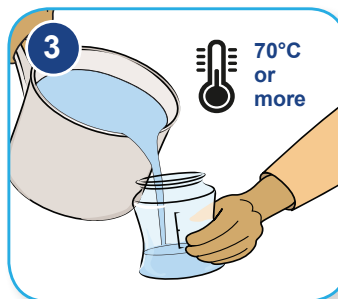


### Sterilizing water

Boil water for 2 minutes. See Tip Sheet #2 for what waters are safe to use.

Make formula with water that is 70°C or more (1 litre of boiled water cools to about 70°C after 30 minutes).

For healthy babies, sterilized water cooled to room temperature can be used as long as the formula is fed immediately.



Check the expiry date on the can.

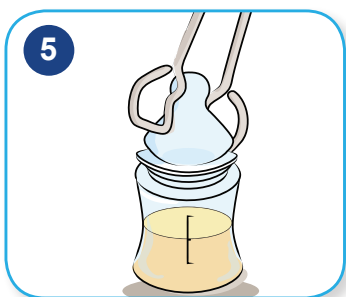
Pour the needed amount of sterilized water into a sterilized bottle.



Use the appropriate number of scoops as per instructions on the can.

Fill the scoop inside the can with powdered formula. Do not pack the powder down. Level the scoop with a sterilized knife.

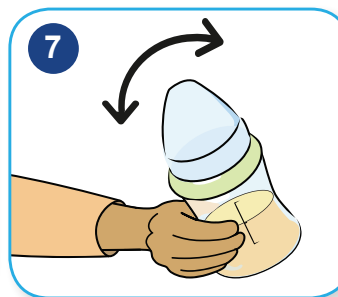
Add the powder to the sterilized hot water.



Pick up nipple, cap and ring with sterilized tongs and put on bottle.



Tighten the ring with your hands.



Shake the bottle until no lumps of powder are left.

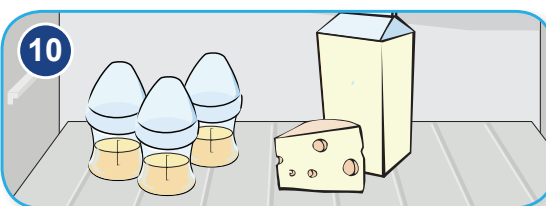


Quickly cool the bottle of formula under cold, running water or in a container of cold water. When it is at body or room temperature, feed your baby.



Feed your baby in response to baby's feeding cues (See Tip Sheet #6).

Throw out formula that your baby doesn't drink after 2 hours.



It is safest to use a freshly prepared bottle each time you feed your baby. If you prepared the bottles with warm/hot water, cool the bottles quickly under cold running water or in a container of cold water. Once cooled, place them in a refrigerator and use within 24 hours.

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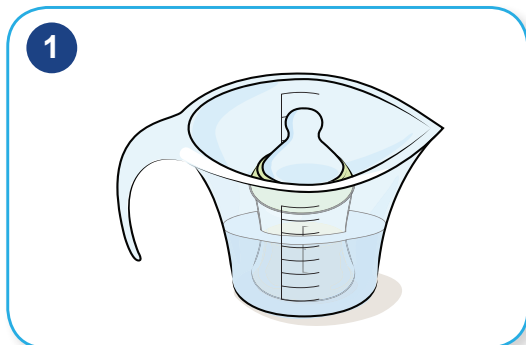
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## Warming Formula

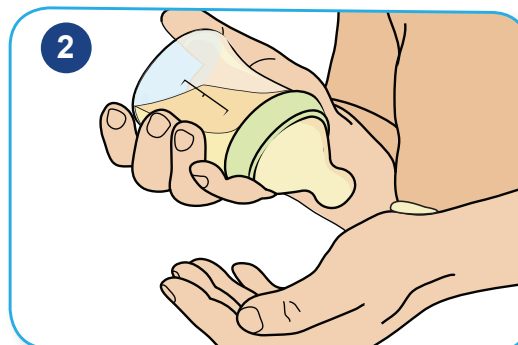


Babies may drink formula warm or cold.

Warm a bottle of formula by:

- Putting the bottle in a container of warm water or using a bottle warmer.
- Warming it for no more than 15 minutes.
- Shake the bottle a few times during warming.

**Do not heat formula in the microwave.**



Once the formula is warmed, shake the bottle.

Put a few drops of formula on the inside of your wrist to make sure the formula is not too hot. It should feel slightly warm, not hot.

## How To Bottle Feed Your Baby



Your baby shows early signs that they are hungry by:

- Stirring and moving their arms.
- Opening their mouth & lip smacking.
- Turning their head towards you.

This is a good time to feed your baby.

Most babies eat 8 or more times in 24 hours.



Your baby is much hungrier when you see:

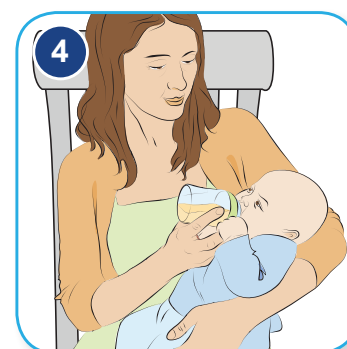
- Hands going to their mouth.
- Sucking and licking movements.
- Restlessness.
- Making sounds.



Your baby is showing signs that he is extremely hungry by:

- Fussing and crying.
- Being agitated.
- Being exhausted and falling asleep.

You may have to calm your baby if they are upset.



Hold your baby in an upright position when bottle feeding. Put the bottle nipple just below the lower lip and wait for a wide-open mouth to put the bottle in.

Do not prop a bottle or put your baby to bed with a bottle.





Give your baby a break if they show signs of stress:

- Milk leaking out of their mouth.
- Choking or gagging.
- Gulping or swallowing fast.
- Squirming or pushing the bottle away.
- Moving their head away.



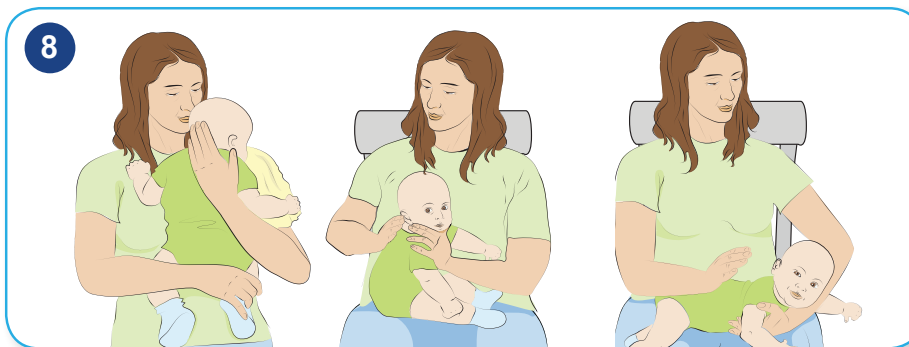
Signs that your baby needs to burp are:

- Arching their back.
- Getting cranky or fussy.
- Pulling away from the bottle.
- Sucking slows down or stops.



Stop the feeding when your baby shows signs of fullness. These include:

- Slowing down or stopping sucking.
- Closing their mouth.
- Turning their head away.
- Pushing away from the bottle or person feeding them.
- Falling asleep.



Burp your baby by gently patting their back with a cupped hand. Try these positions to burp your baby.

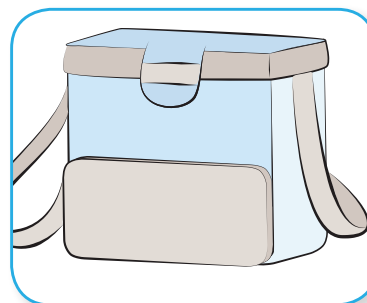
## Transporting Formula

If you travel, prepare the formula ahead.

Only take a bottle with you after it is cooled in a refrigerator and is cool to touch.

Keep the formula in a cooler bag with a freezer pack until feeding time.

Throw out unused formula after 24 hours.



For more information on how and when to feed your baby see pages 16-20 in the booklet **Infant Formula: What You Need To Know**.