

A guide to formula feeding your baby

Hamilton Health Sciences

St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

Hamilton Public Health Services

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Formula feeding your baby



Formula provides good nutrition for your growing baby during the first year. Your baby does not need other foods or fluids, such as water, herbal tea or cereal during the first 6 months.

Formula contains Vitamin D, so your baby does not need a Vitamin D supplement.

Give your baby iron-fortified formula.

There are different types of formula for babies. Most are made from cows' milk. Soy formula is not usually recommended. It is best to give your baby a formula with added iron, called iron-fortified.

Ask your doctor, midwife or other health care provider which formula is best for your baby.

At 6 months, when your baby starts eating solid foods, your baby will still need to have formula until he or she is 9 to 12 months old.

Types of formula

Formula comes in 3 forms:

- liquid concentrate that you mix with water
- ready-to-feed liquid formula – no mixing with extra water
- powder that you mix with water

Always check with doctor, midwife or other health care provider before changing your baby's formula.

Liquid concentrate and ready-to-feed formula are sterile until the container is opened.

Do not use powdered formula unless advised by your doctor, midwife or other health care provider.

Powdered formula is not sterile. It may contain germs. In rare cases it has made babies sick if not prepared and stored properly.

If your baby is ill or less than 2 months old and premature or low birth weight, do not use powdered formula unless advised by your doctor, midwife or other health care provider.

Choosing baby bottles

Do not use unmarked plastic bottles or bottles with this symbol.



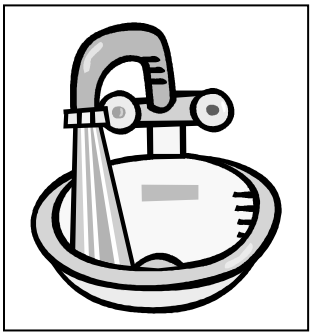
Health Canada recommends bottles that do not contain bisphenol-A (BPA). BPA is a chemical used to make some kinds of plastic. Products with the number 7 inside the recycle symbol may contain BPA. BPA can be harmful to your baby.

Do not use unmarked plastic bottles, as there is no way of knowing if they are made with BPA or not.

Always use bottles labelled BPA-free or glass bottles.

For more information about BPA,
call Health Connections at 905-546-3550.

Choosing safe water



It is safe to use tap water, tested well water and store-bought bottled water to mix formula. All of these types of water must be sterilized.

Tap water is the best choice (filter tap water if your house has lead pipes). Run water from the cold water tap for at least 2 minutes before using. This removes deposits of minerals from the water pipes. Do not use softened water. It may be too high in salt.

If you use well water: test for bacteria, nitrates, lead, fluoride and other minerals to make sure that the water is safe. To find out how to test your water, call 905-546-2189 to speak with a Public Health Inspector.

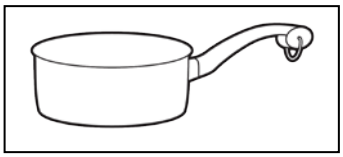
Bottled water is a more expensive choice.
Read the label. Choose plain bottled water with low levels of minerals or commercial baby water.
The water must be sterilized.

Do not use mineral, distilled, flavoured, vitamin-enriched or carbonated water to mix formula.

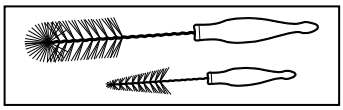
Sterilizing supplies – what you need

Always sterilize supplies for mixing formula.

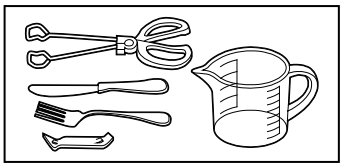
Sterilize all feeding supplies before using them.
Sterilizing kills germs that could make your baby sick.
Always sterilize supplies for mixing formula.
Gather your supplies.



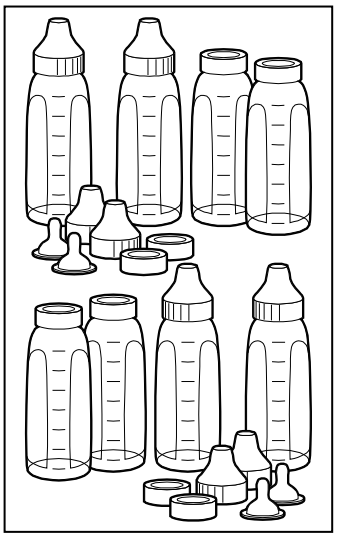
Large open pot.



Nipple brush and bottlebrush.



Tongs and can opener.
Glass measuring cup.
Fork, if using powdered or liquid concentrate formula.
Knife, if using powdered formula.

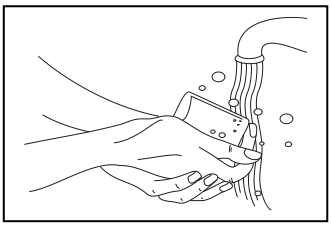


To make just enough bottles to last 1 day,
you need 6 to 8 bottles, nipples, caps and rims.

Choose nipples that are right for your baby's age.
For the first 3 months, use a "slow flow" nipple.
It has 1 hole that lets formula come out about 1 drop a second. Do not make the hole bigger. Throw out nipples when they become sticky or worn.

If using disposable liners, sterilize only the nipples, rings and caps. Throw out plastic liners after one use.

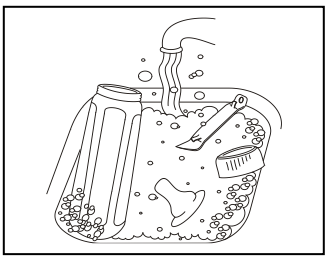
Sterilizing supplies – steps



Step 1

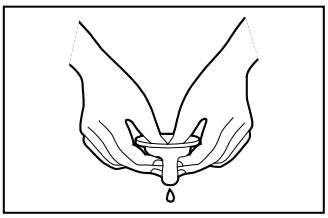
Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
Clean and sanitize* the area where you will prepare your supplies.

* To sanitize: Mix 5 mL (1 teaspoon) household bleach with 750 mL (3 cups) of water. Put in a spray bottle. Spray counter and wipe with a clean towel.



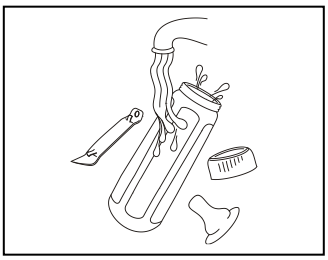
Step 2

Wash all supplies in hot soapy water.



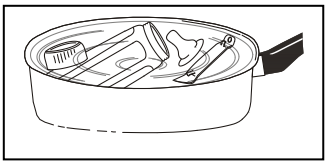
Step 3

Make sure holes in nipples are not clogged.
If nipples are sticky or worn, throw them out.



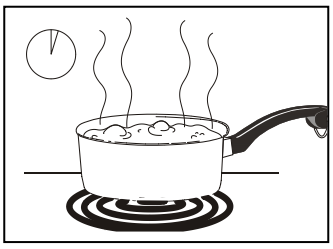
Step 4

Rinse well.



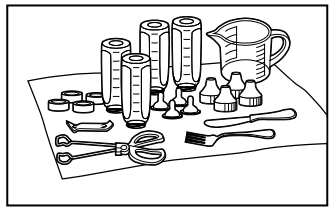
Step 5

Put supplies in a pot.
Cover with clean water.



Step 6

Bring to a rolling boil in an open pot. Continue to boil for 2 minutes. Remove supplies with sterile tongs.

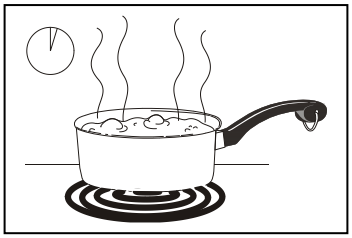


Step 7

Set on clean towel to air-dry and cool to room temperature before using.

Sterilizing water

Always sterilize water for mixing formula.

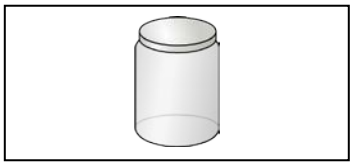


If you need to mix formula, sterilize the water first. Boiling water makes it sterile and safe to use.

Use water from the cold water tap. Let the water run for 2 minutes before using.

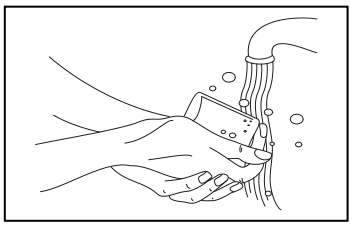
Heat at least 1 litre (4 cups) of water in a pot to a **rolling boil and continue to boil for 2 minutes**. Do not use a kettle that shuts off before the water has boiled for 2 minutes.

Storing sterile water

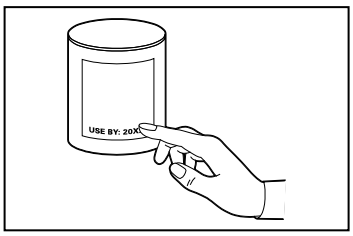


Store boiled water in a tightly sealed, sterilized container for 1 day (24 hours) at room temperature or up to 3 days (72 hours) in the fridge.

Preparing liquid concentrate formula



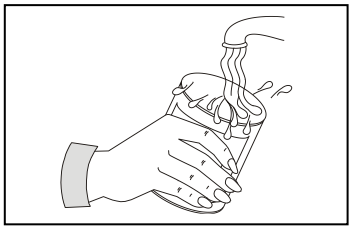
Wash your hands with soap and warm water.



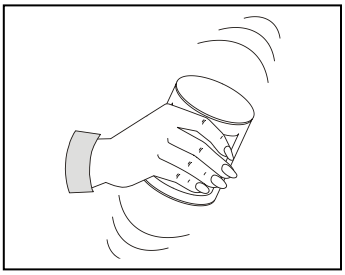
Check the can for dents. Do not use formula from a can that is dented or damaged.

Check that the word “concentrate” is on the label.

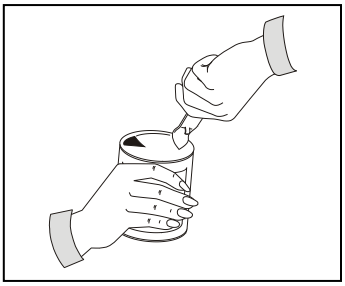
Check the expiry date (“Exp”) on the can. Do not buy or use formula after that date.



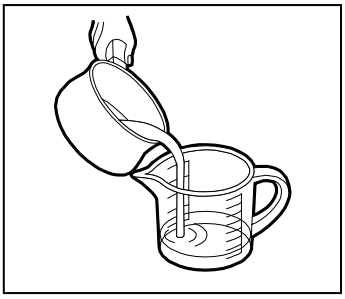
Wash the top of the can with hot water.



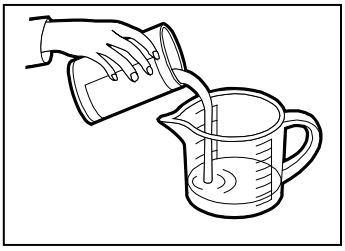
Shake the can.



Open the can with the sterile can opener.



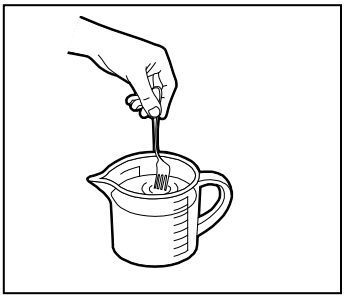
Pour sterilized water into the sterilized glass measuring cup. Do not measure water in a bottle as it is not accurate.



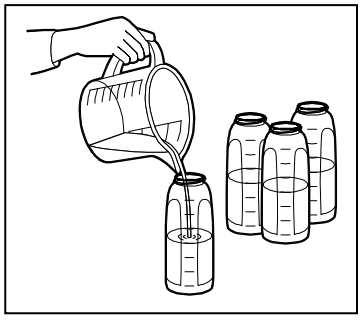
Add an equal amount of liquid concentrate formula.

It could harm your baby if you add too much or too little water.

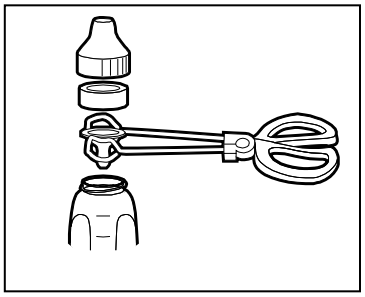
Measure carefully. Using too much or too little water could harm your baby.



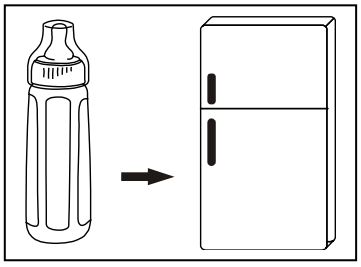
Mix well with the sterilized fork.



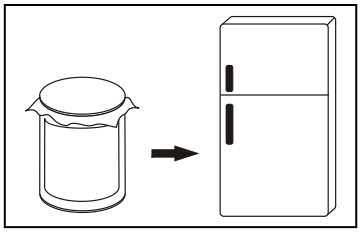
Pour mixed formula into bottles.



Pick up sterilized nipples, rims and caps with sterile tongs and put on bottles. Tighten the rims with your hands.



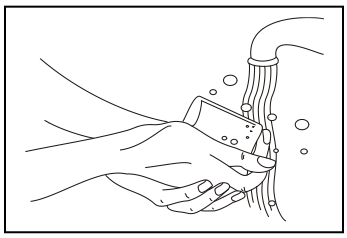
Place bottles in the fridge right away.
Use prepared formula within 1 day (24 hours).



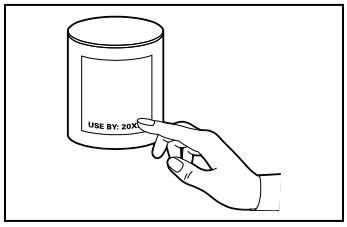
If there is liquid concentrate formula left, cover the open can and refrigerate immediately.

Use within the time recommended by the manufacturer.

Preparing ready-to-feed formula

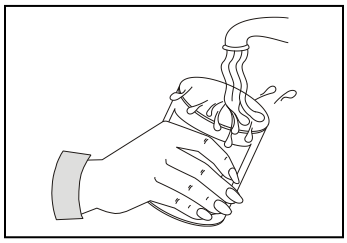


Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

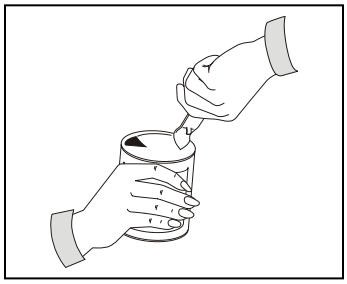


Check the can for dents. Do not use formula from a can that is dented or damaged.

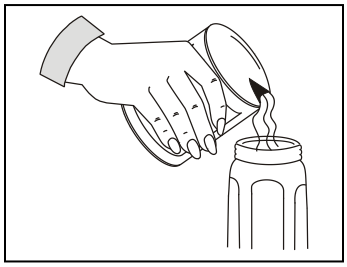
Check the expiry date (“Exp”) on the can.
Do not buy or use formula after that date.



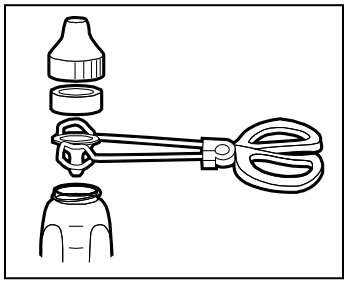
Wash the top of the can with hot water.



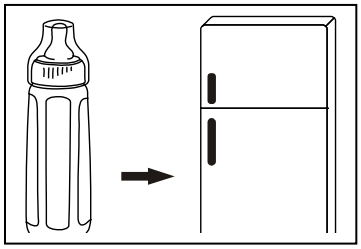
Shake the can.
Open the can with the sterilized can opener.



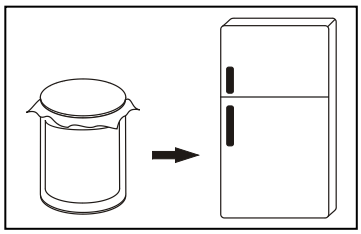
Pour the amount of formula for 1 feeding into each sterilized bottle. **Do not add water!**



Pick up sterilized nipples, rims and caps with sterile tongs and put on bottles. Tighten the rims with your hands.



Place bottles in the fridge right away.
Use prepared formula within 1 day (24 hours).



If there is formula left, cover the open can and refrigerate immediately.

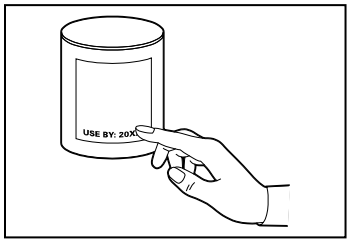
Use within the time recommended by the manufacturer.

Preparing powdered formula

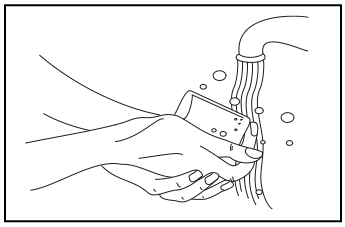
Do not use powdered formula unless advised by your doctor, midwife or other health care provider.

Making 1 bottle

It is best to make 1 bottle at a time and feed your baby right away.

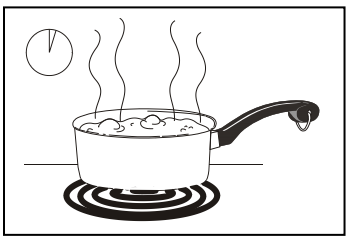


Check the can for dents. Do not use formula from a can that is dented or damaged. Check the expiry date ("Exp") on the can. Do not buy or use formula after that date.



Wash your hands with soap and warm water.

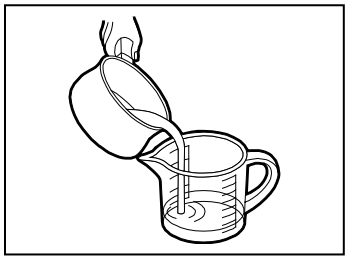
Heat water in a pot to a **rolling boil and continue to boil for 2 minutes**. Do not use a kettle that shuts off before the water has boiled for 2 minutes.



For a healthy term infant, the water can be cooled to room temperature, **if the bottle is used right away**.

If your baby is ill or less than 2 months old and premature or low birth weight, it is important to prepare formula with sterilized hot water at 70° C or higher. **The water must be hot enough to kill germs that might be in the powder.**

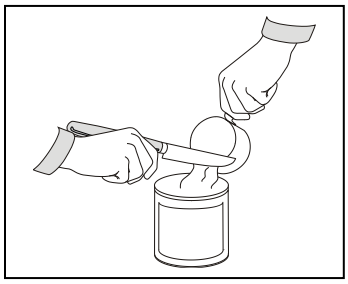
Always use sterilized water to make formula.



Pour the sterilized water into a sterilized glass measuring cup.
Do not measure water in a bottle as it is not accurate.

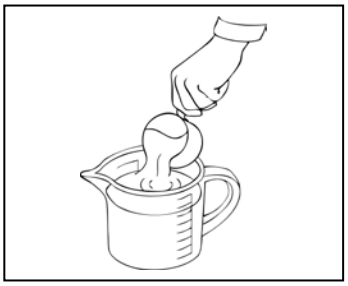
It could harm your baby if you use too much or too little water.

Measure carefully.
Using too much or too little water could harm your baby.

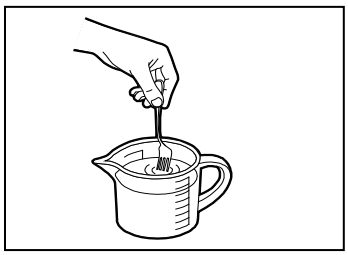


Fill the scoop from the can. Always use the scoop provided in the can.

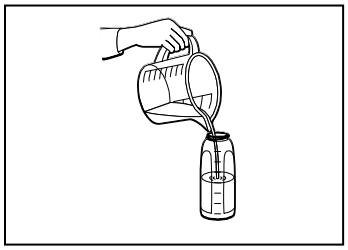
Level the top with the sterilized knife. Measure carefully. Using too much or too little powder can harm your baby.



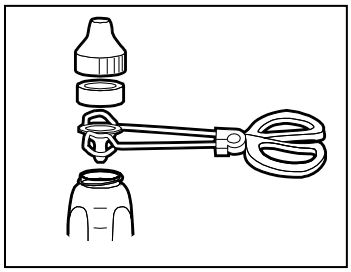
Add the correct number of scoops of powder to the water in the glass measuring cup.



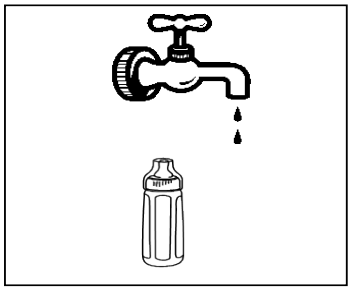
Mix well with the sterilized fork until there are no lumps of powder.



Pour the amount of formula needed for 1 feeding into the bottle.



Pick up the sterilized nipple, rim and cap with sterile tongs and put on bottle. Tighten the rim with your hands.

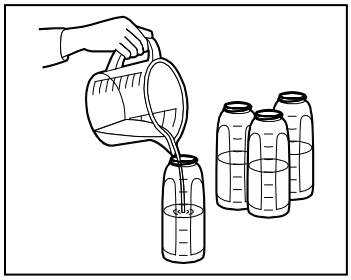


Cool the bottle quickly by holding it under cold running water or place in cold water or ice water.

Shake the bottle well and test on your wrist before you feed your baby. The temperature should be between room and body temperature.

Feed your baby right away. Throw out any leftover formula.

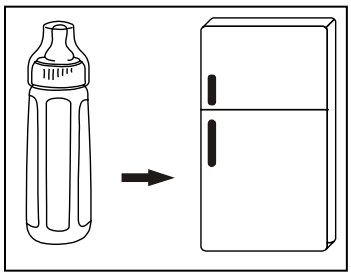
Making more than 1 bottle at a time



It is best to make 1 bottle of formula at a time and feed your baby right away.

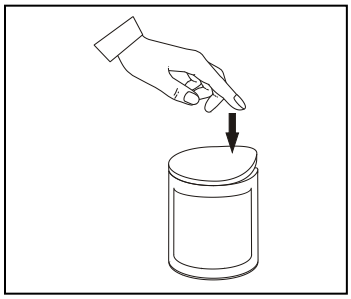
To prepare more than 1 bottle at a time, it is important to use sterilized hot water at 70˚C or higher.

Follow the directions for preparing powdered formula **starting on page 9**. Mix hot water with the powder.



Pour the formula into cooled, sterilized bottles.

Cool under cold running water or in ice water. Place the bottles in the fridge right away. **Use prepared formula within 1 day (24 hours)**.



Cover the open can with the plastic lid.
Make sure the lid is tightly closed.
Store the can in a cool dark place at room temperature.
Use the rest of the powdered formula within 1 month and before the expiry date (“Exp”) on the can.

Feeding your baby



Every baby is different. **Follow your baby's cues.** Let your baby decide how much formula to take.

From birth to 2 months of age, your baby should feed at least 6 to 10 times in 24 hours. This is usually about every 2 to 4 hours.

It is normal for some babies to feed more often than this, especially during a growth spurt.

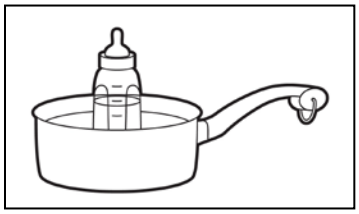
Knowing when it is feeding time

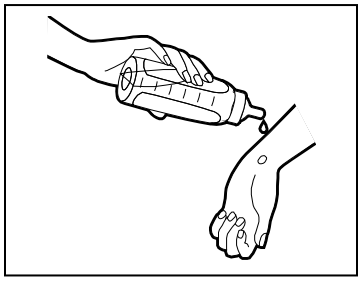
Crying may be one of the last signs that your baby is ready to feed.

Feed your baby when he or she is hungry and ready to feed. Some signs that your baby is ready to feed are:

- bending arms to bring hands closer to the face
- rubbing or scratching the face with hands
- looking around
- trying to suck at whatever is close to the face
- moving eyes rapidly behind closed lids

Getting ready to feed





Most babies enjoy their bottles slightly warmed. Warm the bottle by placing it in a bottle warmer or in hot tap water for no more than 15 minutes. Shake the bottle to mix it.

Never heat your baby's bottle in a microwave or convection oven. This heats the formula unevenly, creating "hot spots" that could burn your baby's mouth and throat. This can also break down plastic.

Always check the temperature of the formula before feeding. Put a few drops of formula on the inside of your wrist. It should feel slightly warm, not hot: between room and body temperature.

Giving your baby a bottle

Choose a quiet place where you and your baby can feel relaxed. Get into a comfortable position. You may want to support your arms and the baby with a pillow.



Always hold your baby during feeding. Babies like skin-to-skin contact.

Cradle your baby in your arms, with your baby's head higher than his or her body.

Gently touch the nipple to your baby's lips. As your baby opens his or her mouth, gently put the nipple in. Never force the nipple into your baby's mouth.

Never prop your baby's bottle or leave your baby alone during a feeding.

Tip the bottle so the nipple fills with formula. This will prevent your baby from swallowing air which causes gas. As your baby drinks, you will see bubbles rising in the bottle. This means your baby is sucking well.

Feeding is a special time to get close to your baby. Hold your baby close, smile and talk to him or her while feeding.

Every baby is different. Follow your baby's cues. Let your baby decide how much formula to take.

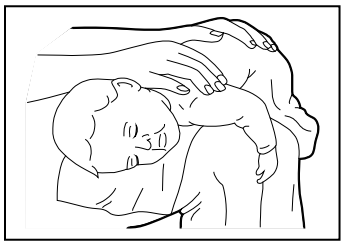
A feeding usually takes less than 30 minutes.
It is normal for your baby to take a break and stop sucking for a few moments. If your baby is resting, you can gently take the bottle out of his or her mouth.

Never put your baby to bed with a bottle.
The formula can cause tooth decay (cavities).

Never prop a bottle as this increases your baby's risk of choking.

Burping your baby







Burping helps release air that is swallowed during a feeding. Burp your baby when you are about halfway through a feeding or when he or she shows signs of needing to burp.

Signs that your baby needs to burp are:

- arching the back
- getting cranky or fussy
- pulling away from the bottle
- sucking slows down or stops

Burp your baby by gently patting or rubbing his or her back. Try these positions to burp your baby:

- hold baby upright over your shoulder
- place baby on his or her stomach across your lap
- hold baby in a sitting position on your lap

Finishing the feeding

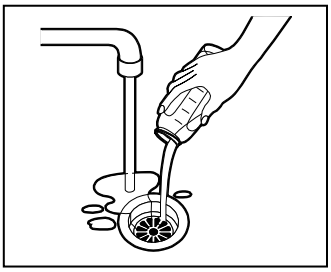
Follow your baby's cues. Look for these signs that baby has finished feeding:

- becoming quiet and content
- sucking stops and baby does not want to start again after burping or changing positions
- turning head away
- looking relaxed and sleepy

Do not try to make your baby drink all of the formula.

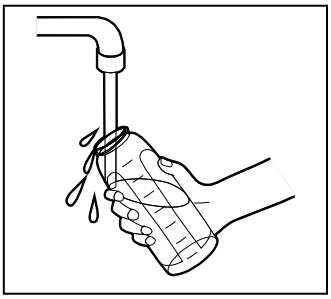
Babies know when they have had enough. They do not need to finish the whole bottle.

After the feeding



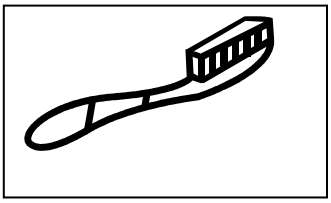
After the feeding, throw out any formula that is left in the bottle. Never reuse or reheat formula.

Throw away formula that has been at room temperature for more than 2 hours. After 2 hours, harmful germs can start to grow in the formula, which could make your baby sick.



Rinse bottle and nipple right after the feeding.

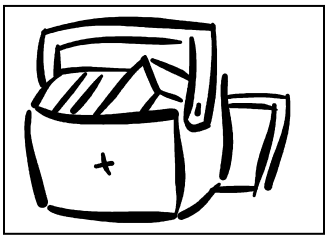
Cleaning gums and teeth



After each feeding wipe your baby's gums with a clean, warm, damp cloth. This cleans the gums and gets your baby used to cleaning inside his or her mouth.

As your baby grows teeth, wipe the gums and brush the teeth with a toothbrush that has soft bristles. This helps prevent tooth decay (cavities).

When you are travelling



Take prepared bottles of formula from the fridge and put them in a cooler bag with an ice pack.

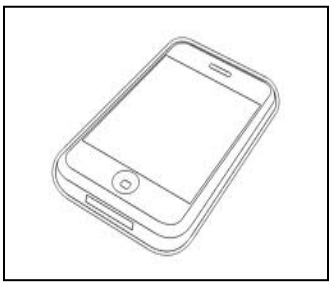
Use the formula within 2 hours.

If you can, put the bottles in a fridge when you get to your destination.

For long trips, consider using ready-to-feed formula.

An alternative if you are using powdered formula: Carefully measure the amount of powdered formula and the amount of sterile water to make a bottle and put in separate containers. Mix the powder and water together when you need to feed your baby.

Questions?



If you have questions or concerns about feeding your baby, please call:

- your doctor, midwife or other health care provider
- Public Health Services in your area. In Hamilton call **Health Connections** at **905-546-3550**

If you have questions about feeding your baby or want to speak with a registered dietitian:

- Call **Eat Right Ontario** toll-free at **1-877-510-5102**
- Visit www.Ontario.ca/EatRight

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