

# Formula Feeding your Infant at Home

## Choosing a Formula

Types of Formula	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ready To Feed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No added water</li> <li>• Sterile</li> <li>• Convenient for travel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive</li> </ul>
Liquid Concentrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sterile</li> <li>• Less expensive than ready to feed formula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must add water</li> </ul>
Powder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easily available in stores</li> <li>• Less expensive than ready to feed formula</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must add water</li> <li>• Not sterile – see preparation instructions</li> </ul>

Note: Some products are available in “Step 2” or “Stage 2” versions. These products are made for babies 6-12 months old. However, the differences are small. It is not necessary to switch to these products at 6 months of age.

## Safety Tips:

### How to Sterilize Water:

- 1) Boil water for 2-5 minutes then cool to room temperature
- 2) **DO NOT** use an electric kettle as it will shut off before the water boils for 2 minutes
- 3) For **premature or immunocompromised** babies using powder formula, Health Canada recommends cooling water to 70°C and then mixing with formula powder. Maintaining water at 70°C during mixing kills potential harmful bacteria. Allow formula to cool before feeding.

Note: Water must be **sterilized** until **4 months** of age OR **4 months corrected age** if your baby was born prematurely.

### How to Sterilize Bottles:

- 1) Ensure hands and countertops are cleaned well
- 2) Sterilize bottles and nipples by **washing in hot, soapy water, rinsing** and then **boiling items for 2-5 minutes**
- 3) **Allow to air dry or cover** with a clean dish towel **if not using items immediately**

### **Choosing Safe Water:**

**Tap/ Municipal Water:** Use water from the **cold tap**. **Run water** for least **2 minutes** before using OR use a **water filter**.

**Well Water:** ensure Public Health Unit is **testing water regularly**.

**Bottled Water:** choose **plain** water

**\*DO NOT USE:** mineral, distilled, flavoured, vitamin enriched, carbonated water, or water with high fluoride (higher than 1.5 mg/L).

### **Preparing formula:**

Follow mixing instructions on the formula container unless instructed by your healthcare provider.

#### Liquid Concentrate

Use liquid measuring cups to measure

**Expiry:** once opened, can is safe to use for 48 hours if kept in the fridge

#### Powder Formula

Use scoop in can to measure and knife to level powder **\*DO NOT** pack powder

**Expiry:** once opened, can is safe to use for 1 month if kept in a dry, cool place

**Automatic infant formula preparation machines: NOT recommended** for safety reasons. Harmful bacteria may grow in the water or machine and formula may not be mixed correctly.

## Common Questions:

### How long can I keep formula once I prepare it?

- 1) Prepared formula: Can be kept for up to **24 hours in the fridge** or **2 hours at room temperature**.
- 2) Once the bottle has **touched your infant's lips**, formula is safe to use for **1 hour**, then should be discarded.

### How do I warm formula?

- 1) Warm bottles in a bowl of warm water for a maximum of 15 minutes prior to feeding. Or use a home bottle warmer
  - **DO NOT** warm bottle in the microwave as it can create hot spots and cause serious burns.

### Travelling with formula:

Put prepared formula in a **cooler bag with an ice pack** and use within **2 hours** OR **measure** out powdered formula and sterile water needed and **store in separate containers**, then mix when ready to feed baby.

### Vitamin D

**Health Canada** recommends all infants get **400 units** of Vitamin D daily **until 1 year of age**.

**TIP:** Roughly 1 liter of formula would provide 400 units of vitamin D. If your infant takes **less than 1 liter of formula** each day, you should provide a **supplement** of 400 units once daily

For more information visit the HHS formula feeding guide at the QR code below:

