



Feeding Your Baby

Your baby's first food: infant formula

*Deana Hildebrand, PhD., RD,LD, Associate Professor & Extension Specialist
Christine Walters, RDN, LD, MS, Extension Program Assistant
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Nutritional Sciences Department, Oklahoma State University*

Your baby can receive good nutrition from either breastmilk or infant formula. Infant formulas are made from cow's milk or soy milk. Like breastmilk, they have the right balance of nutrients and energy. Many have added iron, which is necessary for growth. If you use an infant formula, talk with your doctor about which one is best for your baby.

Types of infant formula

- Ready-to-feed is the most expensive. No mixing is necessary and it is ready to use.
- Liquid concentrate formula costs less than ready-to-feed. Mix it with an equal amount of water.
- Powdered formula is the least expensive. Mix one level scoop of powder with 2 ounces of water.

Mixing formula

Always follow label directions when mixing and storing formula. Using the wrong amount of water can cause the baby to become sick or grow slowly. Always wash your hands before mixing formula. Be sure bottles, nipples and caps are washed in hot, soapy water and rinsed in hot, clean water. If you use well water, you may want to boil the water or use bottled water.



Warming bottles

Most babies prefer warm formula. You can heat filled bottles by placing them in a container of warm water for a few minutes. Test the formula temperature on your skin to be sure it is not too hot. Do not heat bottles in the microwave. The formula may get too hot and burn your baby.

How much formula

The amount of formula your baby drinks depends on individual needs, age and weight. Your baby will be hungrier some days than other days. Use the following chart only as a guide.

Age total amount of formula per day

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Birth to 4 months | 18 to 32 ounces |
| 4 to 6 months | 28 to 45 ounces |
| 6 to 9 months | 24 to 32 ounces |
| 9 to 12 months | 24 to 32 ounces |

Let your baby decide how much to eat. It is okay if your baby does not finish a bottle. Below are some signs to know when your baby is full:

- Your baby may close their mouth or turn their head away from the bottle.
- Your baby may fuss when you place the nipple on their lips.
- Your baby may play with or bite the nipple.
- Your baby may fall asleep.

You will know your baby is eating enough if:

- They have six or more wet diapers each day.
- They seem happy between feedings.
- Their weight increases steadily.

Remember that regular cow's milk is not the same as infant formula made from cow's milk. Babies are not ready for regular cow's milk until they are 1 year old. After the first birthday, serve whole milk until your baby is 2 years old. After the 2nd birthday, slowly begin serving low-fat milk. Do not put juice or water in the bottle. Solid foods should not be added to your baby's diet until he or she is 4 to 6 months old.

References:

American Academy of Pediatrics. Healthy Children. November 2015.

Oklahoma State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, State and Local Governments cooperating. Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact the Oklahoma Department of Human Services at 1-866-411-1877. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Oklahoma State University, in compliance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other federal laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Robert E. Whitson, Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Vice President, Dean, and Director of the Division of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and has been prepared and distributed at no cost to the taxpayer. Revised 0618 GH.