

feeding your premature baby

FORMULA or FORTIFIERS

Premature babies have *different* nutrition needs for each stage of growth. At times it may be necessary to:

- Add fortifiers to breast milk
- Use special premature formula

When your baby's growth "catches up", we can use unfortified breast milk, standard formula, or premature discharge formula.

It is always important to be *clean* when mixing your formula or fortifying your breastmilk. Always follow the mixing instructions carefully. NEVER dilute a formula unless instructed to do so by your doctor.

FEEDING Q & A

Should I wake my baby up for feedings?

If a baby is growing well, it is ok to give feedings when the baby wakes up and acts hungry.

You must feed babies that have *not* reached their growth goals on special schedules.

How do I know when my baby has had enough?

Usually babies on normal schedules start to lose interest in the feeding after 15 or 20 minutes. If you or your baby gets upset during a feeding, take a break and try again later.

Babies who are *not* reaching growth goals need to be fed on schedule. Babies must get a certain amount of formula each feeding.

We will give you instructions explaining the amount of formula your baby must take or how long you should breast feed.

How do I wake a baby up?

- Remain calm and patient
- Gently stroke infant arms and legs
- Unwrap the blankets
- Change the diaper

My baby eats very quickly. Is this a problem?

Sometimes a baby sucks quickly without taking a breath. Sometimes they cough and choke while feeding. If this happens, remove your breast or the bottle nipple from the baby's mouth. Continue the feeding when your baby calms down.

BREAST FEEDING

Relax and enjoy feeding your baby. If your baby is only getting breast milk:

- Nurse as often as your doctor has advised.
- Nurse at least 8 to 12 times in a 24 hour period.
- Nurse when your baby is hungry or at least every 3 hours or as directed by your doctor. It is not uncommon for a newborn to nurse as often as every 1 ½ hours.
- Give a bottle after the feeding only if advised by your doctor.
- Spend **at least 10 minutes on one breast** before switching to the other breast. It is not necessary to switch after 10 minutes. Babies may get everything they need off the first breast, but always offer the second breast just to make sure.
- Burp your baby between breast feeds

Pumping

- If the baby only nurses from one breast, you may or may not choose to pump the other breast.
- It may be necessary to pump after feedings to empty your breasts.
- At each feeding remember to alternate breasts.
- Talk with a lactation consultant for advice on weaning from pumping.

MIXING AND MEASURING FORMULA

Water

Although most tap water is safe, boil all water used for mixing formula.

If you use tap water from a city source:

- Bring it to a rolling boil. Boil at least 1 minute.
- Cool water in a sealed, sterile container.

If you use well water:

- Bring it to a rolling boil for 1 minute.
- Boiling water over 1 minute may concentrate minerals too much.
- Cool water in a sealed, sterile container.
- Have well water tested for nitrate and lead.
- Call your local Health Department for more information.

Formula Mixing

Follow manufacturer's directions on the label exactly.

TIPS ON KEEPING CLEAN

Wash hands before feedings and before preparing bottles.

Sterilize all bottles & supplies in either:

- A sterilizer or dishwasher
- Wash in hot tap water and dishwashing soap and rinse in hot tap water (as hot as you can stand).

1. Always place formula in refrigerator after you prepare it.
2. Do not freeze infant formula.
3. Cover opened powder cans with plastic lids and store in a cool, dry place (not a refrigerator).
4. Mark the lid of the can with date you opened it. Use within one month of opening.
5. Throw out formula that your baby does not drink within 1 hour.

Warming Formula

Warming a formula is not necessary. If you decide to warm it:

- Set the bottle in a pan or bowl of warm (not boiling) water.
- Keep the water level an inch below the bottle cap.
- Let the bottle sit in the water for 5-10 minutes.
- Always shake a few drops of the formula onto your wrist before giving it to the baby to make sure it is not too warm.
- Never warm formula or breast milk in a microwave oven.

Formula Storage

- Prepared formula should be stored in a refrigerator.
- Formula prepared from powder may be stored in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.
- Formula prepared from concentrated liquid and opened ready to feed containers may be stored for up to 48 hours in the refrigerator.

Measuring Guide

Use only liquid measuring cups to measure formula or water. Do NOT use standard dry ingredient measures for water.

Use only the scoop provided in your can of formula to measure powdered formula.

Breast Feeding Instructions:

Name of Formula: _____

Calories per Ounce: _____

YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

YOUR SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Sources: *Nutritional Care for High-Risk Newborns* (Groh-Wargo, Thompson, Hovasi, and Hartline, 2000), *Pediatric Nutrition Handbook, 6th edition, AAP*