



## Guidelines for Infant Formula

*Prepared by the Health & Safety Specialists at Child Care Aware® of North Dakota*

- Whether bottles are brought from home or prepared on site, each bottle should have a cover and should be labeled (using water resistant pen), with the infant's full name and the date the formula was prepared. Unlabeled bottles should not be used or accepted.
- It is important that an infant is not mistakenly given the wrong formula. If this occurs, it is important to notify the parents as soon as possible and to watch the infant closely in case of an allergic reaction.
- Bottles brought from home should be immediately stored in the refrigerator. A thermometer should be checked at least daily to be sure the temperature is 40 degrees F or below.
- Bottles and containers of formula should not be kept in the door of the refrigerator because the temperature of the liquids will not stay as stable as they would on an inner shelf.
- When bottles are being prepared on-site, mix formula carefully, following the directions on the label.
- Always check the expiration date on cans of formula before using.
- Once opened, cans of powder are recommended to be dated and used only for one month. Make sure your hands are clean and dry before touching the scoop.
- Use the scoop that comes with the can. Do not interchange the scoop from one product to another.
- Clean the top of all cans of liquid concentrate or ready-to-feed formula with soap and water before opening. Wash can opener before using as well.
- Clean and sanitize counter before preparing a bottle of formula. If unable to sanitize counter, place clean paper towel on the counter to provide a clean workspace.
- Wash hands at a "clean" sink before and after preparing or feeding a bottle. A "clean" sink is one that has been disinfected or where no washing after diapering or toileting takes place.
- Keep nipple covered and place on counter cover down. If there is no cover, place ring on counter upright, so that nipple is not touching anything.
- Make sure water to make formula is from a food sink, not from a sink used after diapering. If only one sink is available in the room, get a jug of fresh water from the kitchen daily to make formula.
- It is important to make sure that the water used to prepare formula is from a source approved by the local health department. If there is doubt, the water should be tested by the local health department to make sure that it is safe for an infant to drink.
- Run cold water for at least a minute before using, if you have older plumbing containing lead pipes or fittings. To reduce the potential for lead in the water, don't use warm tap water to make formula.
- When mixing/shaking formula in bottle, the cover should be on the bottle. If no cover is available, cover nipple with clean paper towel or washcloth. Be careful not to touch the nipple with bare hands. It is important to keep nipple as germ-free as possible.
- Use warm water, crockpot, or bottle warmer to heat bottles. Never warm bottles in the microwave. The microwave does not heat evenly, which may cause hot pockets. Serious burns can occur because of the "hot spots" in the bottle.

- Glass bottles can be used in child care, but can be safety hazards. Glass can break. Glass also conducts heat easier than plastic, increasing the possibility of burns. If you choose to use glass bottles, handle/heat very carefully to prevent burns/breakage. Consider using protective covers for bottles or shatterproof glass bottles.
- If a crockpot is used to heat formula, it should contain water that does not exceed 120 degrees F and should be emptied, sanitized, and refilled with fresh water daily.
- Heat bottle with cover on. If no cover, make sure bottle doesn't fall over in water (contents may be contaminated).
- After warming a bottle, always gently shake the bottle and check the temperature on the back of your hand, without touching the nipple, before feeding the infant. The temperature is correct when it feels neither cool nor warm. Remember, formula that feels warm to you will probably be too hot for the infant.
- Excessive shaking of formula may cause foaming that increases the possibility of feeding air to the infant.
- Caregivers should feed infants on demand unless the parent and the child's health care provider give written instructions otherwise.
- Never prop a bottle or put an infant to bed with a bottle. This can lead to choking, increase in tooth decay, and a greater chance of an ear infection. Hold infants upright when feeding a bottle. If infants can hold their own bottle, keep head elevated and stay within arm's reach.
- A bottle that has been fed over a period that exceeds an hour from the beginning of the feeding or has been unrefrigerated an hour or more should not be fed to an infant. Once an infant has nursed from a bottle, germs from their mouth are introduced into the formula. Neither refrigeration nor reheating will prevent these germs from growing. Label bottle with the time the bottle was heated or offered to an infant to ensure that a bottle is not fed past one hour.
- The same bottle should not be used for two feedings. Formula should never be served from a bottle that has already been used, nor should formula be added to "top off" a bottle.
- Prepared formula from concentrate or ready-to-feed should be discarded after 48 hours.
- Prepared formula from powder should be discarded after 24 hours.
- Formula should never be frozen.
- Whole milk should be avoided until 1 year of age.