

How to feed your baby using powdered infant formula

Breastmilk provides all the food and water that an infant needs to grow during the first 6 months and continues to provide healthy and safe nutrition well into toddlerhood. Breastmilk also protects infants from infections. Therefore, if your baby is currently both breastfed and formula fed, it is recommended to return to breastfeeding only. Infants (under 1 year of age) who are not breastfed need a suitable breastmilk substitute, such as infant formula. From 6 months onwards, older infants need other foods (such as meat, dairy, vegetables and fruit) in addition to breastmilk or infant formula for their healthy growth and survival. During emergencies, breastfeeding is life saving for infants.

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What is powdered infant formula?

The milk in this tin is like the brands of infant formula on sale in Ukraine. It is made from dried cow's milk and is suitable for babies from birth. When mixed with **clean boiled drinking water (or bottled water)** it will provide all the food a baby needs until about 6 months of age. There is no need to add other foods unless this is advised by a health worker.

If your baby is **under 6 months of age**, infant formula (*labelled as suitable from birth*) is the only suitable milk to use. If your baby is **over 6 months of age**, you can use either infant formula or other milk sources instead. Acceptable milk sources include pasteurized full-cream animal milk (cow, goat, sheep), Ultra High Temperature (UHT) milk, fermented milk or yogurt. These items may be easier to find and are less risky than using powdered milk. Condensed milk is not suitable for infant feeding. **Any animal milk given to infants <12 months of age should be boiled and left to cool before giving the milk, to prevent the risk of gastrointestinal blood loss.**

What do I need to know?

When using powdered infant formula:

- **Instructions vary per brand:** Always read the instructions that are printed on the tin very carefully.
- **The instructions on the can for mixing infant formula with water need to be followed exactly.** Combine the correct amount of hot water with the exact amount of powder in a cleaned and sterilized measuring jug (using the measuring scoop provided with the product).
- If you run out of infant formula, you should not add more water to make it last longer.
- Hygienic preparation with boiled water (cooled to around 70°C) is strongly recommended to reduce the risk of contamination within the infant formula whenever possible.
- Unclean water, bottles, teats and cups can make your baby ill. Cleaning feeding utensils is essential to prevent sickness.
- Bottles are more difficult to clean than cups. A baby can cup feed from birth. During emergencies, cup feeding is much safer than bottle feeding. If cups cannot be adequately cleaned, consider using disposable cups instead. If you wish to continue to bottle feed, good hygiene (including sterilization of bottles) is essential to reduce the risk of infection.
- *If your baby is over 6 months of age, you can mix infant formula into your child's food (such as porridge) rather than providing it as a drink.*
- Do not keep leftover milk for more than 2 hours or force your baby to finish it. Instead, drink it yourself, mix it in family food or give it to an older, non-breastfed child or elderly family member. It is not safe to keep it for your infant.
- Feeding is a time for emotional and physical connection and comfort, regardless of what your baby is fed. This is especially important during stressful times, such as emergencies.
- When your baby is using infant formula, he/she is at higher risk of diarrhea and chest infections, especially in the current emergency conditions. *Find out what medical services are available wherever you are so that you are prepared and can get treatment quickly.*
- If your baby becomes ill, continue encouraging him or her to drink and eat, offering smaller amounts more often if appetite is reduced.
- If you have any questions about feeding your baby, ask a trained health care provider for help.

How much powdered formula will I need?

The average amount of powdered infant formula required is 3.5 kg per child per month. Products are available in either 400 g or large size canisters of 800 g or 900 g. Tins should be stored in a cool, dry place with the lid securely fastened. Feeding and preparation utensils, such as cups, should be sterilized and stored in a dry, clean place, preferably in a storage bin with a secure lid to avoid contamination.

Age	Number of tins per month (400 g)	Number of tins per month (800 g)
0 to <6 months	9 tins	4.5 tins
6 to 11 months	6 tins	3 tins

What steps must I follow when preparing powdered infant formula?

Steps in preparing powdered infant formula	
1	Wash hands thoroughly with water and soap or alcohol-based sanitizer before preparing infant formula and feeding your baby.
2	Ensure the feeding preparation equipment and cup and other utensils are thoroughly cleaned. You can also boil the utensils to make sure that they are clean.
3	Boil water and let it cool off to around 70°C. Follow manufacturer's instructions for preparing the formula. It takes 1 litre of boiled water about 30 minutes to cool to 70°C – do not wait longer.
4	Measure the amount of water and infant formula according to the manufacturer's directions. Mix well with a cleaned and sterilized spoon.
5	Cool the prepared formula to room temperature so that it is lukewarm, not hot, when dripped on the inside of a wrist. Pour it into a cup and offer it to the child.

What if I cannot boil water?

- You can prepare formula using bottled water at room temperature and give it to your baby immediately.
- Formula prepared with water that is cooler than 70°C should be disposed of immediately after use and not stored for later.

What if I do not have access to bottled water?

- You can prepare feeds using safe water at room temperature and feed your infant immediately.
- Feeds prepared with water cooler than 70°C should be disposed of immediately after use and not stored for later.

How should I feed my baby with powdered infant formula?

- Start to prepare the formula when you spot early signs that your baby is hungry, if possible.
- Whenever possible, hold your baby close to your body during or between feeds. Your close presence helps your baby feel calm and safe, while skin-to-skin contact helps to regulate their body temperature.
- Feed the baby using a clean, open cup. Even a newborn baby learns quickly how to drink from a cup.
- Pour the formula into the cup.
- Hold the baby closely in an upright or semi-upright position on your lap.
- Hold the cup to the baby's mouth such that the milk just reaches the baby's lips. The cup rests lightly on the baby's lower lip, and the edges of the cup touch the outer part of the baby's upper lip.
- Do not rush and do not pour the milk into the baby's mouth. Continue to hold the milk to the baby's lips while the baby sucks, sips or takes it with his/her tongue.
- When the baby has had enough, the baby will refuse to take any more milk.
- After use, clean the cup thoroughly using soap and hot water and store it in a clean area. Disposable cups should be discarded.
- Whenever you can, treat feedings as a time for bonding and connection, rather than just physical nourishment. For example, you might feel like talking to or singing to your baby while feeding them.

