

## Baby Formula Shortage...What should I do?

### Here are some tips to try:

- ✓ Check smaller stores, as they may not be out of supply when the bigger stores are
- ✓ You can buy formula online, but be careful *where* you buy
- ✓ If your baby does not have any allergies or intolerances and is not on a specialty formula, try switching to any available formula (even store brand)
- ✓ Ask your pediatrician — some doctor offices have samples

### Ask your pediatrician about any recommendations!

- ✓ If you are a WIC participant:
  - Continue to search for formula at *all WIC authorized stores* as often as possible
  - **DO NOT** wait until the end of your benefit period to begin looking
  - If you do not see any formula on the shelf, ask a manager or store employee if they have any available
  - Ask store employees when shipments are expected to arrive
  - Some vendors are limiting what is put on shelf to extend duration of stock
  - Some vendors are holding some of the WIC size containers back to prioritize getting them to WIC customers
- ✓ If you have SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) use it to buy the store brand of formula

## Can I add more water to the bottle or make my own formula?

No, it is not recommended to dilute formula or make your own.



*These are the dangers of...*

<i>Diluting Formula</i>	<i>Homemade Formula</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Watering down formula is dangerous</li> <li>✓ Can cause nutritional imbalances in your baby and lead to serious health problems</li> </ul> <p><b>Always mix formula as directed by the manufacturer!</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Recipes for homemade formulas are <u>not safe</u></li> <li>✓ Does not meet Food &amp; Drug Administration (FDA) minimum requirements for nutrition and safety</li> <li>✓ Does not meet your baby's nutritional needs</li> <li>✓ Infant deaths have been reported from use of homemade formulas</li> <li>✓ FDA reports that some babies fed homemade formula have been hospitalized for low calcium</li> </ul>

## What about cow's milk or other plant-based milks?

Using cow's milk or plant-based milk such as soy and almond is **not ideal** and should not become routine.

Cow's milk may be used **ONLY IN EMERGENCIES!**

- ✓ If you have to offer cow's milk to your baby, make sure the baby is older than 6 months but the closer the baby is to age 1, the better
- ✓ There is no specific amount of cow's milk that infants 6-12 months of age should drink but it is recommended to limit intake to no more than 24 ounces a day
- ✓ Plant-based milks are not recommended for babies as they may not have the important nutrients your baby needs (protein, iron, calcium and vitamins)

## Well, what is wrong with cow's milk?

- ✓ It does not have the right amount of nutrients your baby needs
- ✓ It does not contain iron, which is important for growth and development of your baby
- ✓ If you offer cow's milk, your baby may need an iron supplement or high iron solids
- ✓ Low iron can lead to anemia
- ✓ It can cause bleeding in your baby's intestines
- ✓ It has too many proteins and minerals for your baby's kidneys to handle

Though cow's milk can potentially be used, remember it is only during emergencies and **should not** be the norm. **Always check with your baby's pediatrician!**

*Visit [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org) for more information.*

## Can I try to breastfeed my baby again?

According to the CDC, it is possible to re-initiate breastfeeding. This is called re-lactation. However, it is important to know that while possible, there are some considerations to keep in mind:

With relactation, you are:

1. Re-teaching your baby to breastfeed
2. Re-developing a milk supply — which requires nipple stimulation and milk extraction (via nursing, hand expression, pumping)

Some important things to keep in mind:

- ✓ Infants who are younger will be easier to relactate
- ✓ Milk production can start as early as a few days after beginning nipple stimulation, but may take weeks to months
- ✓ If baby is willing to latch on, breastfeed at least every 2-3 hours
- ✓ Offer baby the breast for comfort any time you see a chance
- ✓ Some babies have gone back to the breast after many months of bottle feeding
- ✓ If baby is not able to latch, you can still provide breast milk via pumping and providing it in a bottle or cup
- ✓ Pumping will make a huge difference in increasing your milk supply, especially if baby is not latching

*Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-special-circumstances/supporting-families-with-relactation.html> for more information*