

Prepare Infant Formula Safely

A mother's breasts provide safe milk. Parents who feed their babies formula must follow safety tips to protect their babies.

Why? You must protect your infant from:

1. Bacterial infections such as E. Sakazaki. Powdered formula is **not sterile**.
2. Scalds and burns. Hot or very warm formula burns a baby in **seconds**.
3. Formula without proper nutrients. Mixing formula with **hot water** can destroy nutrients.
4. Formula that is not properly mixed. Formula that is too strong may cause diarrhea. Adding too much water denies baby the needed nutrients. Over time, she could develop seizures or brain damage.

Start your safety routine at the store. Avoid dented cans of formula. Check the date the powder expires.

At home, read and **carefully follow the directions on the formula label**. If you do not understand them, ask a nurse or doctor for help. Boil **new** bottles and nipples **for at least 5 minutes**.

Write out your step-by-step plan to prepare the formula.

*Follow this **plan every time you make a bottle***. Make sure other caregivers follow your plan.

Prepare one bottle at a time – just before feeding.

If you **must** prepare a bottle in advance, refrigerate **only** the boiled **water** in the bottle. At feeding time:

- First, warm the bottle in warm water or a bottle warmer. **Do not microwave**.
- Then, add the formula per directions and shake. Formula mixes best in warm water.



Sample Plan

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
 2. Clean the counter/table where you prepare the bottle. Wash it with soap and water.
 3. Wash the bottle and nipple with **hot, soapy water**. Rinse them. Or, use the dishwasher.
 4. Put **cold tap water** in a pan. Once the water starts boiling (bubbling), let it **boil for 1 minute**.
 5. Let the boiled water cool so it is just **warm to the touch**.
 6. Pour the cooled water into the clean bottle.
- At Feeding Time**
7. Add the powdered formula. Use the measuring scoop in the formula package. Keep the scoop dry. Level off the formula with a sterilized knife or the level in the package.
 8. Place the nipple on the bottle. Shake the bottle until the powder dissolves.
 9. Shake a few drops of formula on the inside of your wrist. The formula should feel warm or cool.
 10. Feed your baby. Formula should be used **within 1 hour** – from shaking to the end of baby's feeding.
 11. Throw away any formula left in the bottle at the end of 1 hour.

Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org


St. John's Hospital
In partnership with the SIU School of Medicine