

May 24, 2022

The Iowa Departments of Public Health and Human Services (HHS) have created this information to help parents trying to find infant formula.

Parents and care givers are offered the following guidance:

- **Consider a different formula:** For most babies, it is OK to use a similar version of their formula if their regular brand is not available.
- **Talk to your doctor:** Parents should talk with their doctor about the best option for their child. Doctors can tell you about different options that will meet their baby's nutritional needs.
- **Call the store:** Before shopping, contact the store to see what they have available. Check with store workers to see when deliveries are expected.
- **Do not use homemade formula:** Homemade formulas can lack the important nutrition infants need for growth and development.
- **Mix formula correctly:** Mix formula using the correct amount of water according to the label. Watering down formula can lead to serious nutrition and health problems.
- **Do not feed your baby regular cow's milk or other non-dairy milks (like soy, almond, oat)** until one year old, unless you've talked to your child's doctor.
- **If your child is ready,** you can supplement their diet with some solid foods. Talk to your doctor about what foods are appropriate.
- **Make small bottles:** Mix only the amount of **formula** your baby will eat to limit what you throw away if the baby doesn't finish.
- **Breastfeed your baby:** When possible, breastfeeding is the best option for infants. But breastfeeding is not always an option for all families.
- For parents who are breastfeeding and need help:
 - Reach out to a specialist or peer counselor. See <http://iabreastfeeding.org/gettingstarted> for information.
 - Iowa's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program can provide help to new mothers. See more information at <https://idph.iowa.gov/wic/breastfeeding/peer-counseling>.
 - Breastfeeding women can get a breast pump at low or no cost through their health insurance, Medicaid, or WIC to help with milk supply.

- Check out the <https://uichildrens.org/mothers-milk-bank-iowa>: Breast milk banks dispense pasteurized donor human milk to infants in the hospital and at home. A processing fee is charged.
 - Use caution when using human milk from friends or family and consider the risks and benefits and talk with your child’s doctor.
- Several hospitals in Iowa also offer breastfeeding help. Parents should check with a local hospital to see what services are offered.

IDPH has taken these steps to help parents:

- Iowa WIC was given permission to provide different formula for WIC families when the formula supply issues first began earlier this year. Contact your local WIC agency for help finding formula.
- State and community resources are available to help with the cost of buying formula:
 - Iowa’s Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). To find your local WIC clinic, visit <https://www.signupwic.com/>.
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). To see if you are eligible for SNAP, visit www.dhs.iowa.gov/how-to-apply.
 - The Family Investment Program (FIP) may be able to help with the cost of buying formula. To see if you are eligible for FIP, visit www.dhs.iowa.gov/how-to-apply
- For help finding food visit the Food Bank of Iowa at <https://foodbankiowa.org/find-food/> or call 211 for community resources and services near you.
- WIC enrolled families who need assistance finding formula should contact their local WIC clinic, find a complete list [here](#). If they are unable to contact their community clinic, they can call 1-800-532-1579.

For more information visit:

- [Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Statement on Shortage of Breastmilk Substitutes](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Helping Families Find Formula During the Infant Formula Shortage](#)
- [Keeping Infants Safe in the Midst of Formula Shortages](#)
- [Questions & Answers for Consumers Concerning Infant Formula](#)
- [FDA Advises Parents and Caregivers to Not Make or Feed Homemade Infant Formula to Infants](#)
- [Is Homemade Baby Formula Safe?](#)