

Formula Feeding

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Government of Western Australia
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Delivering a Healthy WA

Requirements for formula feeding

What to bring to hospital

- One tin of formula - ensure it states on the tin 'suitable from birth' and it is within its expiry date
- Two bottles with caps
- Two teats
- One bottle cleaning brush
- One plastic knife

At home

- Your choice of formula as required
- A supply of bottles and teats
- One bottle cleaning brush
- One plastic knife

How to clean equipment

Teats

- Wash in hot, soapy water forcing a little through the feeding hole to make sure it is not blocked.
- Rinse with clean hot water to remove any detergent.

Bottles

- Clean with a bottlebrush and hot soapy water ensuring all milk residue is removed.
- Rinse thoroughly with hot water.

Cleaning and sterilising bottles and equipment

It is very important that all equipment used for feeding babies and for preparing feeds has been thoroughly cleaned and sterilised before use.

1. Hands should always be washed thoroughly with soap and water.
2. Wash feeding and preparation equipment (e.g. cups, bottles, teats and spoons) thoroughly in hot soapy water. Where feeding bottles are used, brushes should be used to scrub inside and outside of bottles and teats to ensure that all remaining feed is removed.
3. After washing, rinse thoroughly in clean water.
4. If using a commercial home steriliser (e.g. electric or microwave steam steriliser, or chemical steriliser), follow manufacturer's instructions. Feeding and preparation equipment can also be sterilised by boiling:
 - a. Fill a large pot with water and completely submerge all washed feeding and preparation equipment, ensuring there are no trapped air bubbles.
 - b. Cover the pot with a lid and bring to a rolling boil, making sure the pot does not boil dry.
 - c. Keep the pot covered until the feeding and preparation equipment is needed.

5. Hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water before removing feeding and preparation equipment from a steriliser or pot. The use of sterilised kitchen tongs for handling equipment is recommended.
6. To prevent recontamination, it is best to remove feeding and preparation equipment just before it is to be used. If equipment is removed from the steriliser and not used immediately, it should be covered and stored in a clean place. Feeding bottles can be fully assembled to prevent the inside of the sterilised bottle and the inside and outside of the teat from becoming contaminated.

Guidelines for preparing your baby's formula

Follow the instructions on the tin regarding the amount of formula your baby will require per feed/per day.

These are minimum requirements but you should feed your baby according to their need, i.e. demand feed them.

1. Clean the surface on which the feed will be prepared.
2. Wash hands with soap and water and dry using a clean cloth.
3. Boil a sufficient volume of water. If using an automatic kettle, wait until the kettle switches off; otherwise make sure that the water comes to a rolling boil.

NB. Bottled water is not sterile and must be boiled before use.

4. Taking care to avoid scalds, pour the appropriate amount of water into a sterilised bottle. To achieve the appropriate temperature, the water should be left for no more than 30 minutes after boiling.
5. Add the exact amount of formula to the water as per the manufacturer's instructions on the tin.
6. Shake or swirl gently until the contents are mixed thoroughly, taking care to avoid scalds.
7. Immediately after preparation, quickly cool the formula to feeding temperature by holding the bottle under running tap water or by placing it in a container of cold or iced water. Ensure that the level of the cooling water is below the top of the bottle's lid.
8. Because very hot water has been used to prepare the feed, it is essential that the feeding temperature is checked before feeding in order to avoid scalding the baby's mouth. You can test the temperature by putting a few drops of formula on the inside of your wrist. If necessary continue cooling.
9. Discard any feed that has not been consumed within two hours.

