

# How to feed your baby using ready-to-use 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 ready-to-use infant formula?

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The milk in this container 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 offered as instructed, it will provide all the food a baby needs until about six 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, 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?

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### When using ready-to-use infant formula

- **Instructions vary per brand:** Always read the instructions that are printed on the container very carefully.
- The instructions on the container need to be followed exactly. Feeding too little will not get your baby enough food.
- If you run out of infant formula, you should not add more water to make it last longer.
- Unclean water, bottles, teats and cups can make your baby ill. Cleaning feeding utensils is essential to prevent sickness.
- Do not keep leftover milk. Instead, drink it yourself or give it to an older child. It will become unclean and unsafe for your baby if you try to keep it for another feed.
- 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 giving it to them as a drink.
- 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 to encourage 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 ready-to-use infant formula will I need in a month?

If you are using 200ml containers of ready-to-use infant formula, you will require on average 4 units (800 ml) per day per infant. Older infants will need an average of 3 units (600 ml) per day alongside other foods. If the formula is provided in containers other than 200 ml, your health worker will indicate the number of units required to feed your baby.

Age	Ready-to-use infant formula per day	Number of units per day	Number of units per month
0 to <6 months	800 ml	4	120
6 to 11 months	600 ml	3	90

## What steps must I follow when preparing ready-to-use infant formula?

Steps in preparing ready-to-use infant formula	
1	Wash hands thoroughly with water and soap or alcohol-based sanitizer.
2	Ensure the feeding preparation utensils and cup and other utensils are clean.
3	Pour the ready-to-use formula into a clean cup and offer it to the infant.
4	Hold your baby close to you and provide as much milk as he/she wants. Do not pour milk quickly into his/her mouth. Let the infant sip slowly.
5	Discard any leftover formula that is not used within two hours or mix with other foods or consume it yourself as the caregiver or offer to the elderly.
6	Thoroughly clean feeding and preparation equipment after use

## How should I feed my baby with ready-to-use infant formula?

- Feed the baby using a clean open cup. Even a newborn baby learns quickly how to drink from a cup.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- If the baby does not drink all of the infant formula during a feeding, discard what is left in the cup or use it to cook a meal. Or, mix it in family food or give it to an older, non-breastfed child or elderly family member. It is not safe to keep for your infant. Giving a baby leftover milk can make your baby ill.
- After use, clean the cup thoroughly using soap and hot water and store it in a clean area. Disposable cups should be discarded.



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