## Counseling Guide Infant – Formula Fed

**Health Outcome:** Achieves optimal growth and development in a nurturing environment and develops a foundation for healthy eating practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Open Ended Questions</th>
<th>Suggested Affirming Statements</th>
<th>Suggested Nutrition Education Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caregiver:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Discuss:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How did your baby’s last check-up go?</td>
<td>• Keeping your pediatric appointments shows your baby’s health is important to you.</td>
<td>• The importance of immunizations and monitoring of growth and development.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Feeding:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Discuss:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tell me about the kind of formula you feed your baby.</td>
<td>• There are a lot of different formulas to choose from. It can be difficult to know which is best for your baby.</td>
<td>• Iron-fortified formula is the only appropriate formula for infants not receiving breastmilk or who are partially breastfed. There are no known medical conditions for which the use of iron-fortified formula is contraindicated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How do you know when it’s time to feed your baby?</td>
<td>• Some babies are more difficult to “read” than others.</td>
<td>• Feeding the infant when he or she shows signs of hunger (the infant may wake and toss, suck on a fist, cry or fuss, or look like he is going to cry to show hunger). Respond to early signs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What does your baby do to let you know she’s full?</td>
<td>• It’s obvious you pay close attention to your baby.</td>
<td>• Feed until infant shows signs of fullness, e.g., sealing the lips, a decrease in sucking, spitting out the nipple and turning away from the bottle.</td>
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<td><strong>Formula Feeding:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Encourage:</strong></td>
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<td>• Tell me how you prepare your baby’s formula.</td>
<td>• As expensive as formula is, nobody wants to waste it.</td>
<td>• Feeding on demand, unless medically indicated otherwise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What do you know about storing mixed formula?</td>
<td>• When you’ve got so much going on, it’s easy to forget how long a bottle has been sitting out.</td>
<td>See NTM Sections 4.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What do you do with formula left in a bottle after a feeding?</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Discuss:</strong></td>
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<td>• Over-diluting formula may contribute to growth problems, nutrient deficiencies and water intoxication. Under-diluted formula puts an excessive burden on the kidneys and digestive system and may lead to dehydration. Decreasing the water-to-formula ratio may be appropriate for failure-to-thrive, but should only be done when recommended by the health care provider.</td>
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<td>• Water used in preparing infant formula for the first 3 months of life should be brought to a rolling boil for 1 to 2 minutes and then cooled.</td>
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<td>• Use refrigerated bottles of concentrated or ready-to-feed formula within 48 hours of preparation or opening.</td>
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<td>• Use refrigerated bottles of powdered formula within 24 hours of preparation.</td>
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<td>• Prepared bottles of formula should not be left at room temperature for more than one hour.</td>
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<td>• Throw out formula left in a bottle after a feeding. The mixture of saliva and formula promotes the growth of germs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>See NTM Section 4.4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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### Water Supply:
- Tell me about the water you use for mixing formula.
- Most people assume their well water is safe for their infant.
- Discuss:
  - The importance of safe water.
  - CDC recommends private wells be tested annually for germs and every 2 to 3 years for harmful chemicals.
  - To reduce the risk of lead contamination in homes with water from private wells or public water systems:
    1. Always draw water from the cold-water tap.
    2. If the faucet has not been used for more than 6 hours, run cold water for 2 to 3 minutes.
    3. Avoid boiling water for more than 5 minutes.
  - If bottled water is used, distilled water may be the best choice, as it may contain fewer contaminants than bottled spring or mineral water.
  
  See NTM Section 4.1.3

### Baby Bottles and Sippy Cups:
- What do you think are good fluids to feed your baby from the bottle/sippy cup?
- How do you feel about your baby taking a bottle to bed?
- Juice is a nutritious food.
- I can understand your baby wants the comfort of a bottle at bedtime.

### Supplements:
- What kinds of supplements do you think your baby needs?
- You obviously want to provide the best possible nutrition.

### Discuss:
- You obviously want to provide the best possible nutrition.
- Discussing supplement use with health care provider

### Encourage:
- Appropriate bottle-feeding.

### Encourage:
- Bottles should be used for formula and breastmilk. Juice should be offered in a cup without a lid. This will help limit the amount consumed and prevent dental caries.
- Other sweetened beverages are not nutritionally appropriate for infants and will contribute to the risk of dental caries, especially when offered in the bottle or sippy cup.
- Propping the bottle or giving the infant a bottle while lying down, in a car seat, carrier, or stroller can cause choking, ear infections, and dental caries.
  
  See NTM Sections 4.4.2 and 4.4.5

See NTM Section 4.5.1
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## Food Security
- Tell me what you do when you run out of WIC formula.
- Can you tell me about any food assistance programs?
- Tell me about the kitchen area and appliances you use for food storage and preparation.

## Anthropometrics
- How do you feel about the way your baby is growing?
- What has your health care provider told you about your baby’s growth?

## Physical Activity
- Tell me about your infant’s play.
- What kind of things does your baby do/play with?
- What do you know about how infants learn to do things?

## Discuss:
- A lot of people are finding it difficult to make ends meet.
- I can see that you care about feeding your family well.

## Discuss:
- Infant’s growth chart.
- Weight loss is common during the first 3 or 4 days of life as the infant passes his first stools and eliminates extra fluids.
- The infant should exceed his birth weight by 14 days after birth.
- Importance of following a growth curve.
- Appetite and growth spurts (typically 8-12 days, 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months).
- Refer to healthcare provider if weight gain is inadequate or mother continues to be concerned.
  See NTM Section 4.1

## Encourage:
- Feeding on demand.
- Attention to hunger/satiety cues.
- Developmentally appropriate foods.
- Use of appropriate feeding methods, e.g., juice from a cup, cereal by spoon.
- Limit juice to 4 to 6 oz/day.
- Foods without added sugar.
  See NTM Sections 4.1, 4.5

## Discuss:
- Food and other appropriate assistance programs.
- Menu planning and budgeting.
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### Oral health

- Tell me what you know about cleaning your baby’s mouth and teeth.

  - Many parents don’t know that it’s important to clean the gums even before teeth appear.
  - Brushing an infant’s teeth is not easy.

- What are some things you do to keep your baby from getting tooth decay?

  - It takes some patience to teach drinking from a cup.
  - It’s natural to want to give your baby foods that you enjoy.
  - I can see you care about your baby’s health.

- When do you plan to take your baby for their first visit to the dentist?

  - A lot of people don’t realize how important it is to keep baby teeth healthy.

### Encourage appropriate cleaning:

- Before teeth appear: Infant’s mouth should be wiped out gently and the gums massaged with a clean damp gauze pad or washcloth after feedings or at least twice a day, including before bedtime.
- Once teeth appear, teeth should be cleaned well after each feeding or at least twice a day, including before bedtime. To clean the teeth, a very small, child-size toothbrush with soft, rounded end bristles may be used with extreme care. Use water only. Continue using a clean damp gauze pad or washcloth to clean those areas in the mouth without teeth.

See NTM Section 4.7.1

### Discuss appropriate bottle feeding and avoidance of simple sugars:

- Bottles should be used for feeding only infant formula or expressed breast milk.
- 100% pasteurized fruit juice should be given only in a cup. Drinking from a cup will be messy at first and the caregiver will need to be patient.
- Sweetened beverages should not be given to an infant in bottle or cup. The infant should instead be fed more nutritious beverages that will help them grow.
- Infants should not be allowed to walk around or sit alone with a bottle or spill-proof cup for long periods.
- The bottle should only be offered at feeding time, not when going to bed to sleep or for a nap.
- Infants should never be given a pacifier dipped in honey, syrup, or sugar.
- Infant should not be given any concentrated sweet food such as: lollipops, sweet candies, candy bars, sweet cookies or cakes, or sweetened cereals.
- Sweeteners should not be added to their food.

See NTM Section 4.7.3

### Encourage:

- Caregiver to take the infant to their health care provider or a pediatric dentist for a dental check by 12 months of age. If there seems to be dental problems or decay before that age, the infant should see a health care provider as soon as possible.

See NTM Section 4.7

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**Suggested Participant Resources:** #590 “Feeding Your Baby – Birth to 4 Months”