

## Importance of Following Instructions for Infant Formulas

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before preparing formula.
- Follow the health care provider's instructions for mixing formula. (Occasionally, a premature infant needs extra calories and the mother may have been told to prepare the formula in a way that will provide these extra calories).
- If your health care provider does not provide instructions, follow the formula manufacturer's directions for preparing and diluting formula. The manufacturers' instructions are printed on the formula can label.
- Be sure to use the scoop that comes with your brand of powdered formula.
- Do not use a scoop that is included with any other type of formula.
- Once prepared, infant formula can spoil quickly. Either immediately feed the baby or immediately cover the bottle and refrigerate at 35–40°F (2–4°C) for no longer than 24 hours.
- Do not use prepared formula that has been at room temperature for a total of more than 2 hours.
- Do not freeze prepared formula.
- After feeding begins, do not refrigerate the feeding bottle. You must use within 1 hour of mixing the formula or discard.
- Store cans of powdered formula at room temperature.
- After opening the can, keep it tightly covered, store in a dry area, and use contents within 1 month.
- Do not freeze powder. Avoid excessive heat.
- Use unopened formula by expiration date on bottom of can.

## Improper Dilution of Infant Formulas

If you do not prepare infant formula properly, it may cause the following problems.

- Incorrect mixing of formula can make your baby sick and/or it might keep your baby from growing properly.
- If you use too much water when mixing the formula, your baby will not get all the nutrients needed to grow. The baby will also get too much water for her/his small body.
- If you use too much liquid or powder formula in the bottle, it could hurt the baby's kidneys and/or brain.

Drinking too much water can lead to a condition known as water intoxication. A baby can get water intoxication by drinking infant formula that has been diluted with too much water. This condition occurs most often in infants under 6 months of age. Please talk to your WIC nutritionist if you have questions.



### References

1. Infant Nutrition and Feeding: A Guide for Use in WIC and CSF Programs  
[http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Topics/Infant\\_Feeding\\_Guide.html](http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Topics/Infant_Feeding_Guide.html)
2. Instructions for Preparation, Storage, and Use  
<http://www.meadjohnson.com/>
3. Improper Dilution of Formula (AK 49-USDA 415)  
<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/>

Missouri Department of Health and Senior  
Services  
WIC and Nutrition Services  
P.O. Box 570  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570  
573-751-6204  
[www.dhss.mo.gov/wic](http://www.dhss.mo.gov/wic)

