



Different Formulas for Different Needs – Guidelines for Child Care Providers

There are many types of formula, but how do you know which one to offer an infant? **Always use the same formula that the parents use at home.** If your child care center runs out of the formula that the infant uses, contact the parent to bring in more or have your director purchase more for your infant room.

If a parent has any concerns whether or not they should change their infant's formula, it is important that you encourage them to discuss this with a health professional. Below is a chart of common types of formula that infants in your care may use.

Type of Formula	Contents	Why Used
ARA (arachidonic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) Added Formulas	Amounts of ARA and DHA differ per formula.	DHA and ARA are fatty acids found in breastmilk that are important for brain and eye development.
Iron-Fortified Formulas	Additional iron is added to the formula.	Iron is important in the growth and development of infants.
Low Iron Formulas	Lower iron with the same calories, protein, vitamins and minerals as iron- fortified formulas.	Only use this formula if a health professional recommends it for certain infant medical needs.
Soy Formulas	Soy protein is used in place of milk protein in the formula. It is milk- free and lactose-free.	Symptoms such as fussiness, spitting-up or gas may be signs of sensitivity to the protein found in milk-based formulas.

Type of Formula	Contents	Why Used
Lactose Free Formulas	Lactose is a sugar found in milk that is removed from the formula.	Symptoms such as spitting-up, vomiting or unusual stooling may mean intolerance to lactose.
“Colic” Formulas	Protein is broken into smaller parts to reduce allergic reactions.	Symptoms such as diarrhea (often with blood), breathing difficulty, hives, rashes, and the uncontrollable crying that is often called "colic."
Premature Formulas	Contains higher levels of protein, calories, and many key vitamins and minerals.	Provides the higher levels of nutrients premature infants need for good growth and development. This should be used only under the care of a health professional.
MCT Oil Formulas	Contains a fat source called “MCT oil.” MCT oil is “medium chain triglyceride”.	Used with infants that have problems absorbing the fat in other formulas. This should be used only under the care of a health professional.

Some women and infants can benefit from WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children). Contact your local health department for further information.

Generic infant formulas must meet certain nutrient levels just like name brand formulas. Please recommend that parents check with a health professional before switching to a different formula.