

Alabama Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program

IF YOU ARE BREASTFEEDING...

and stressed and worried about feeding your baby

Keep offering breast milk!

It provides your baby lifelong protections against many types of diseases and cancers AND protects your health as well. The longer you provide breast milk the stronger the protections.

KEEP UP YOUR MILK SUPPLY

- Breastfeed or express milk around every 3 hours.
- Avoid having full breasts - full breasts signal to your body to stop making milk.
- Talk to a breastfeeding peer counselor or professional to learn the signs that your baby is getting enough milk and for help resolving challenges like engorgement, painful nipples, or a sleepy baby.

CONNECT WITH WIC

- WIC offers nutrition and breastfeeding support.
- You may qualify if you are pregnant, had a baby within the last 6 months, breastfeed, or have a child or foster child under age 5.
- WIC staff can answer breastfeeding questions over the phone.
- Find a WIC office 1-888-942-4673 or www.alabamapublichealth.gov/wic/clinic-directory.html.

LEARN ABOUT LATCHING AND POSITIONING

- You may experience tenderness, but pain is a sign that the latch or position may need adjustment. Check with a lactation professional for help!
- Find helpful videos and tips about positioning, latching, and overcoming common challenges at www.firstdroplets.com or www.globalhealthmedia.org.

KNOW HOW TO STORE MILK

- Start with clean hands and sterilized containers.
- Never use a microwave to thaw milk - thaw in the fridge overnight or in a bowl of warm water.

Countertop

- up to 77° F
- fresh milk: up to 4 hours
- thawed milk: 1-2 hours

Freezer w/Separate Door

- at or below 0° F
- fresh milk: up to 6 months
- never refreeze thawed milk

Refrigerator

- at or below 40° F
- fresh milk: up to 4 days
- thawed milk: up to 1 day

Deep Freeze

- at or below -4° F
- fresh milk: up to 12 months
- never refreeze thawed milk

MANAGE STRESS

- Stress can affect how milk flows and can affect your milk supply over time.
- Use your support system to manage stress.
- Learn physical ways to manage stress while breastfeeding, like deep breathing, meditation, physical activity, or using calming music.
- Seek professional help as needed.



IF YOU ARE BREASTFEEDING AND USING FORMULA...

and stressed and worried about feeding your baby

Keep up your milk supply!

Any amount of breast milk gives baby antibodies that protect against illness, is excellent nutrition, and promotes parent and baby attachment.

MAINTAIN YOUR MILK SUPPLY

- Giving your baby formula can cause your baby to breastfeed less.
- Breastfeed 8-12 times in 24 hours.
- Express your breasts using your hands or a pump at regular intervals to maintain or build your supply.
- Learn more at <https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/combination-feeding-and-maintaining-milk-supply>.

LEARN ABOUT RELACTATION

- Many people are able to relactate after a gap of days or weeks.
- Stimulate the breast frequently and put baby to breast often.
- Seek help through WIC or a lactation consultant.

PREPARE FORMULA SAFELY

IF YOU ARE USING FORMULA...

During emergencies, the safest formula to use is ready to feed formula.

If you are using powdered formula, do not water it down. Learn how to prepare formula safely following these steps.

WASH YOUR HANDS

- Use soap and water and wash for 20 seconds.

HAVE CLEAN BOTTLES READY

- Sterilize bottle and nipple.

BOIL WATER

- Boil water and wait 15-30 minutes to mix with the formula powder.
- Boiling the water makes sure the water is sterile AND that the hot water sterilizes the formula, which may contain bacteria.

MIX WATER AND FORMULA IN BOTTLE

- Fill bottle with HALF of the desired amount of hot water (at least 158°F).
- Add required amount of formula powder, close bottle and shake.
- Add remaining water and shake again.

COOL BOTTLE AND FORMULA

- Place bottle in ice water or under cold running water. Before feeding make sure formula is drinking temperature - it will feel warm but not hot on your wrist (98°F or lower).

