



May 13, 2022

Dear MCHB Grantee:

In light of current reports of infant formula shortages across the country we want to highlight ways that you can help. This letter includes important information and resources about things that you and your partners can do to support concerned families and pediatric health care providers in your state or community.

Families rely on you as a reliable source of information. It is vital to share messages and tips on how to manage formula shortages safely. Here are some key messages:

- **Never dilute formula.** Diluting infant formula with water or other liquids can be dangerous and even life-threatening for babies, leading to a serious nutritional deficit and health issues.
- **Avoid homemade formula:** Homemade formulas often lack or have inadequate amounts of critical nutrients. For example, babies fed homemade infant formula have been hospitalized due to hypocalcemia (low calcium).
- **Use of substitute formulas is OK:** For most babies, if their regular brand of formula is not currently available, it is OK to substitute with a similar version. If families have questions about which formula is acceptable, or if they are still having difficulty finding formula, they should contact their child's pediatric provider or WIC clinic.
- **Talk to your doctor:** Families should consult their pediatrician if their babies or children require a specialized formula and need a recommendation for a comparable formula to use. Providers can also submit an urgent request for specialized formula to Abbott, a primary formula manufacturer. Abbott is releasing some specialty and metabolic formulas on a case-by-case basis.
- **Providers can contact Abbott:** Healthcare providers who provide care for children in critical need of a particular specialty formula should contact Abbott directly to request the product by calling **1-800-881-0876** or visiting their [formula information and product request form](#).

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been meeting regularly with major infant formula manufacturers that have been working to maximize their production to meet new demands.

Read more about [FDA's actions](#).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has granted WIC agencies across the country waivers of certain WIC regulations so that they can

take immediate action to ensure that WIC participants can exchange their recalled baby formula and use WIC benefits to purchase products that have not been recalled.

Read more about [USDA's actions](#).

See below for a list of additional resources that FDA, USDA, and the AAP created for families and health care providers with concerns and questions about the infant formula shortages and safety.

Please let us know if there are questions and needs related to reports of infant formula shortages in your jurisdiction and if additional assistance and/or guidance would be helpful. You may also reach out to your project officer.

Thank you for your efforts every day to improve the health of America's mothers, children, and families.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Warren, MD, MPH, FAAP
Associate Administrator, Maternal and Child Health Bureau

Additional resources:

[FACT SHEET: President Biden Announces Additional Steps to Address Infant Formula Shortage](#)

[AAP HealthyChildren.Org information](#)

[FDA News Release 5/10/2022](#)

[FDA Infant Safety Dos & Don'ts](#)

[FDA Powdered Infant Formula Recall: What to Know](#)

[FDA Investigation of Cronobacter Infections](#)

[USDA WIC Flexibilities](#)

[USDA Infant Formula Safety](#)

[For Providers Only: Abbott Metabolic Formula Information & Product Order Form](#)