

WIC Formula Change 2007

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some common questions about changing formulas, with answers you can provide to WIC participants.

Common questions BEFORE trying the new formula

1. Question: *Why is WIC changing to a different brand of formula?*

Answer: Because our contract with the Ross company ended.

When a contract ends, all state WIC programs have to request bids from the formula companies and give the contract to the company with the best price. This gives the WIC program more money to keep you and your baby on WIC for as long as possible, and to serve more families. The Mead Johnson company, which makes Enfamil LIPIL with Iron and Enfamil ProSobee LIPIL, offered the best formula price.

2. Question: *What formula will my baby be receiving from WIC?*

Answer: Most will get Enfamil LIPIL with Iron or Enfamil ProSobee LIPIL.

If your baby is now on Similac (milk-based formula), she will get Enfamil LIPIL with Iron. If your baby is now on Isomil (soy-based formula), she will get Enfamil ProSobee LIPIL. If your baby is on another formula, we'll need to talk further.

3. Question: *What are the differences between the brands of formula?*

Answer: They have some differences in their proteins.

The main difference between Enfamil LIPIL and Similac is in the type of cow's milk protein they use. The calorie and nutrition content of the two formulas is practically the same. Enfamil ProSobee and Isomil are very similar in their proteins.

4. Question: *What can I do to help my baby get used to a new formula?*

Answer: For some babies, it may help to change slowly to the new formula.

Just mix a little of the new formula with the formula your baby is currently using. Add more of the new formula every day until your baby is drinking only the new formula. You can ask your WIC staff for written directions.

5. Question: *When I change my baby's formula, what should I expect?*

Answer: You may notice a change in your baby's stools (poop) or a little more spitting up. Your baby may notice that the formula tastes a little different.

When you change your baby to a different formula, the frequency or texture or color of your baby's stools may change a little. Some babies burp or spit up a little more than usual when they change formulas, but this should improve in a week or two. Also, it may take a week or so for your baby to get used to the taste of the new formula.

6. Question: *What if my baby is allergic to the new formula or doesn't do well on it?*

Answer: This is very unlikely.

Because the formula you will be changing to is so similar to what you are now using, an allergy would not be likely. If your baby has any severe reaction, you should report it to your health care provider.

7. Question: *Will babies do well on any formula?*

Answer: Most babies do fine on any formula.

All formulas have to meet federal nutrition standards. Doctors and nutritionists agree that all of the major name brand infant formulas provide adequate nutrition for babies. Most babies grow satisfactorily on any baby formula.

Breast milk is the ideal food for babies which all the formulas try to copy. If you're pregnant, we encourage you to breastfeed your baby when it is born. If you are exclusively breastfeeding, you won't have to worry about any problems with formula.

Common concerns AFTER trying the new formula

1. Concern: *I've tried using the new formula, but my baby keeps throwing up. I'm scared that she might choke, or that she might not be getting enough food to grow.*

Response: Tell me more about what is happening.

Gather more information to assess if this is severe vomiting requiring medical referral by asking:

- How often is the baby throwing up, and how much?
- Have you made any changes in preparing the formula, in your water, in the way you're feeding the baby, or has anyone in your household been sick?

If it seems like normal spitting up, reassure the caregiver that some changes in spitting up are common with a formula change. Refer to RD if baby is vomiting large amounts or projectile (forceful) vomiting.

2. Concern: *My baby's stools (poops) are different with the new formula.*

Response: This is normal.

Because there are slight differences between the new and old formulas, the frequency, color, or texture of your baby's stools might change. These are normal changes.

3. Concern: *I tried the new formula, and my baby got a rash.*

Response: This is probably not related to changing formulas.

A rash is not usually related to a formula change. If the rash continues or gets worse, have your baby's health care provider look into it.