



STATE REPRESENTATIVE Robin Comey

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Robin.Comey@cga.ct.gov | Facebook.com/RepComey

National Infant Formula Shortage Patient Information

Yale
NewHaven
Health
Yale New Haven
Children's Hospital

What should I do if I am having trouble finding formula?

- For most babies, you can safely switch between brands (including formula and store brands). They are similar and have everything your baby needs.
- If your baby has special nutritional needs and requires a **specialty formula** (e.g., hydrolyzed or amino-acid based), **please check with your pediatrician** as most formulas cannot be safely substituted.
- For new parents, breastfeed even if you plan to also give formula. Getting breast milk at the very beginning of life is important. Your breastmilk can also be frozen and saved for when you are not there to feed your baby or if the formula shortage continues.
- Contact your pediatrician or local WIC (Women, Infants & Children) office who may be able to suggest places where formula is available.
- Check smaller stores which may have more supply than larger stores.
- If you are buying formula online, be careful of scams. Look for grammar and spelling errors in the ads.

What should parents NOT do?

- **Do NOT** water down the formula. Your baby will not get what they need to grow. Too much water can also be dangerous and can cause seizures. Always mix formula exactly as directed by the manufacturer.
- **Do NOT** make your own formula. Formulas are made to match what babies need to grow. This is not easy to copy. Home-made formulas could also contain germs that are not safe for your baby.
- **Do NOT** use cow's milk, goat's milk or other milks (for example, almond milk) and milk substitutes. These do not have what your baby needs.
- **Do NOT** buy formulas from outside of the United States or from online auctions. Imported formula is not reviewed by the FDA.
- **Do NOT** hoard formula. If everyone buys formula for 2 weeks at a time, there should be enough formula for all babies.

What else can I do?

- Share formula with family and friends in need. Work together to make sure everyone has what their baby needs.
- If you are receiving CT WIC benefits, Abbott is allowing substitutions. If you have WIC benefits and are having trouble obtaining products please email or call your local WIC office.
 - CT WIC website for participants: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/WIC/WIC>
 - CT WIC website for retailers: <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/WIC/Retailers>

Call your pediatrician if you have any questions.

Additional resource from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/ask-the-pediatrician/Pages/Are-there-shortages-of-infant-formula-due-to-COVID-19.aspx>