

Should You Give Formula To Your Healthy Breastfed Newborn?

General Information

It is important to be well-informed about the choices you make for your baby. Before you give your baby any formula supplements, there are important things for you to know from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Recommendation

The AAP recommends only breastmilk be given to babies for the first 6 months of life. The AAP also states that no supplements (plain water, sugar water or formula) should be given to breastfeeding infants unless there is a medical need.

Concerns With Giving Formula

According to the AAP, formula is harder for a baby to digest than breastmilk. This may cause babies to have constipation or diarrhea.

Milk production is based on supply and demand. According to the AAP:

- The more babies nurse the better the milk supply.
- Babies may nurse less often if fed formula.
- When babies don't nurse as much, less milk is produced. This can lead to early weaning from breastfeeding.



© Allina Health System

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends only breastmilk be given for the first 6 months of life.

When formula is given by bottle, babies will suck differently. Newborns may try to nurse from the breast the way they suck from the bottle nipple. This may cause mothers' nipples to become sore.

Exclusive Breastfeeding Decreases Illnesses

Research has found that infants who are only fed breastmilk are healthier according to the AAP. They are at lower risk for illnesses including:

- ear infections
- asthma
- bronchitis

(over)

- colitis
- eczema
- allergies
- diabetes
- obesity
- childhood cancers
- bowel infections.

Whom To Call With Questions

If you have questions or concerns about your baby's health (including feeding and weight gain), talk with your baby's health care provider.

If you have questions or concerns about breastfeeding, talk with your lactation consultant.