Safe Infant Feeding Tips For Families

SAFEST WAYS TO FEED A BABY

TOP CHOICE/
SAFEST OPTION

LEAST SAFE OPTION

1. Direct Breastfeeding
2. Expressed Milk of Lactating Parent
3. Human Milk from Healthy Donor
4. Ready-to-Feed Formula
5. Powdered Infant Formula
6. Babies 6 months and older ONLY – whole cow's pasteurized milk

BREAST/CHESTFEEDING



Direct breastfeeding is safest and can usually continue during stressful situations.

Separated from baby? Hand expression or pumping can help. Skin-to-skin holding or a soft carrier can keep milk supply up, calm baby, and keep baby warm.

CLEANING FEEDING ITEMS



Use safe water to clean bottles, nipples, pump parts, and other feeding items. Disposable items: use once, then throw away.

In emergencies – or for babies with weak immune systems – extra sanitizing with boiling or a "regular" bleach solution is recommended. See details at the link below.

POWDERED FORMULA

Follow package instructions and use the scoop provided.

Use formula before the "use by" date. Do not use damaged or opened containers.

Use safe drinking water. When possible, boil 1 minute, cool 5 minutes, mix with the powder & cool before feeding.

Powdered formula is not sterile.

Refrigerate prepared formula and use within 24 hours.

No refrigeration? Discard prepared formula.



NEVER WATER DOWN FORMULA
It can be extremely dangerous for babies.

RESOURCES/ADDITIONAL INFO

Can be found at www.okbreastfeeding.org

Emergency Infant Feeding Support
COBA
COALITION OF OKLAHOMA BREASTFEEDING ADVOCATES

DO NOT SUBSTITUTE



Do not give animal milk, plant-based milks, toddler formulas, or homemade formulas. These lack some nutrients babies need.

Adapted from North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition SAFE Team, 2026