



Ohio WIC Infant and Child Formula Frequently Asked Questions

Which formulas are approved for WIC participants?

Contact your local WIC clinic to learn which formulas are WIC authorized.

Is a medical prescription for formula needed for children who have a special nutritional need based on their medical diagnosis?

A medical prescription is federally required for infants and children with special nutritional needs due to a medical diagnosis. Contact your local WIC clinic and healthcare provider to assist with the *Ohio WIC Prescribed Formula and Food Request Form*.

What should I do if I can't find the formula my baby normally uses?

- Call the store first and ask about product availability.
- If one store doesn't have the formula you want, try other stores.
- Ask a store worker if there is more formula in the back if there isn't any on the shelf.
- Ask when the next shipment arrives.
- Ask when shelves are usually stocked.
- If you can't find formula in any stores, contact your local WIC clinic for their suggestions.

My child is on a specialized formula for medical reasons. What should I do if I can't find what my child needs?

You should consult with your baby's healthcare provider if your child requires a specialized formula, and you need a recommendation for a comparable formula to use. If you have other questions about your child's nutrition, it is best to consult with your child's healthcare provider to determine if any other forms of nutrition are right for your child.

Can I substitute a different brand of formula if I cannot find the one I normally use?

In most cases, if your baby's regular brand of formula is not currently available, it is okay to substitute with a similar version. If you have questions about which formula is acceptable, or if your infant or child has special nutritional needs, please contact your child's healthcare provider or WIC clinic.

If I cannot find formula at a WIC accepting location, do I lose formula? Will I receive a voucher for formula?

According to federal regulations, WIC benefits are issued on a monthly basis. Any unused product from a given month does NOT carry over to the next month, and no voucher or cash assistance is provided for the unused amount.

Can local WIC offices reimburse WIC participants if they buy formula not on the WIC approved list?

Unfortunately, no. Ohio WIC does not have authority to reimburse WIC participants who do not buy WIC-approved formula.

If I'm running out of formula, can I dilute it to make it last longer?

Unfortunately, no. Diluting infant formula with water or other liquids can be dangerous and even life-threatening for babies. Always follow instructions on the manufacturer's label or those recommended by your healthcare provider on how to prepare formula.

Why shouldn't I feed homemade formula to my child?

Homemade formula often lacks or has inadequate amounts of critical nutrients. Other consequences can include severe nutritional imbalances and foodborne illnesses, both of which can be life-threatening.

Can formula be mixed with breast milk?

Yes, in most cases, it is safe to combine the two methods of infant feeding. It is important to follow proper formula mixing guidelines before the addition of breast milk. For example, a powdered formula should be safely mixed with the appropriate amount of water before adding breast milk. Contact a healthcare provider for additional guidance.

How can families get help accessing specialty formulas?

The Ohio WIC program works with local WIC offices to provide formula to eligible families, including hypoallergenic and other specialty formulas. In addition to the WIC program, the [Complex Medical Help \(CMH\) program](#) works to help eligible Ohioans support nutritional needs through coverage of disease-specific nutritional formulas and supplements. For eligible individuals on the CMH Treatment Program, "Special Formula" coverage may be added to their benefit package, which includes access to coverage for hundreds of available formulas and supplements that may not be otherwise covered through other insurance. To be eligible for the CMH Treatment Program, an individual must meet financial criteria and have one of the eligible medical diagnoses. The metabolic formula program under CMH provides metabolic formula and essential amino acids to individuals born with inborn errors of metabolism that are screened for on the Ohio Newborn Bloodspot Screening Panel. Examples of these disorders include phenylketonuria (PKU), maple syrup urine disease (MSUD), tyrosinemia, and propionic acidemia. Without these special formulas, infants and young children may develop poor health outcomes. Coverage of metabolic formula can continue for any Ohio resident with a qualifying diagnosis who is followed at an [\(Ohio-based Comprehensive Genetic Center\)](#).





Is human donor milk an option if I cannot find formula?

Donor milk from a [Human Milk Bank Association of North America](#) site may be an option with a licensed health professional order stating medical necessity. Medical necessity is determined by your health care provider and may include low birth weight, born at ≤ 34 weeks, a congenital or acquired condition that warrants donor milk, and/or when the infant is unable to medically or physically receive maternal breast milk. WIC does not reimburse the cost of human milk.

How do I get help if I want to increase my breast milk supply?

For support, contact the free [Ohio Statewide Breastfeeding Hotline](#) at 888-588-3423. For 24/7 breastfeeding support, text “BFHOTLINE” to 839863. WIC breastfeeding peer helpers and lactation consultants can also assist parents who wish to increase their milk supply. Contact your local WIC office for more information.

Additional resources:

American Academy of Pediatrics: [Is Homemade Baby formula safe?](#)

U.S. Food and Drug Administration: [Infant Safety Dos & Don'ts](#).

American Academy of Pediatrics: [Relactation: Starting over with Breastfeeding](#).

[Ohio WIC Breastfeeding Page](#)

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