



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary

May 17, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) has been working with partners to monitor the ongoing shortages in infant formula and to provide information and resources to families. This letter includes important information and resources that partners can use to support families who are struggling due to the infant formula shortage.

- Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) participants who are struggling to find infant formula may contact their [local WIC offices](#) for assistance. The Maryland WIC program has a waiver that allows participants to purchase substitute formulas that were not previously covered by WIC. WIC participants may have food benefits adjusted without a visit to the WIC office. To help patients identify WIC-covered formulas that are interchangeable with other formulas, please see *Appendix A: Maryland WIC Formula Substitutes, attached*.
- For families who are not WIC participants, **please see if they are eligible for WIC** by calling 1-800-242-4942 or calling the local WIC Office.
- Families who are struggling to find the formula that they need may contact their doctor for help. Their provider may recommend a comparable formula to use for specialized formula or submit an urgent request for specialized formula. Please see Table A for a list of manufacturers' hotlines that may serve as a resource.
- Continue to support individuals who are breastfeeding and encourage those who are pregnant to consider breastfeeding upon delivery.

As a trusted member in the community, please also share the following important messaging with your clients:

- Never water down or dilute formula. Diluting infant formula with water or other liquids can be dangerous and even life-threatening for babies. Follow the instructions for mixing your baby's formula on the label or provided by your pediatric provider.
- Avoid homemade formula. Homemade formulas often lack or have inadequate amounts of critical nutrients. Although recipes for homemade formulas circulating on the internet may seem healthy or less expensive, they are not safe and do not meet your baby's nutritional needs.
- Use of substitute formulas is OK for many babies. If you cannot find your usual brand of formula, many healthy babies can tolerate switching to another baby formula. If you use a specialized

formula, please work with your pediatric provider to see if you can switch to another FDA-approved baby formula.

Thank you for your efforts to support Maryland families.

Sincerely,



Jinlene Chan, MD, MPH, FAAP
Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services

cc: Donna Gugel, MHS
Courtney McFadden, MS
Shelly Choo, MD, MPH
Jennifer Wilson, MEd, RD, LDN

List A. Manufacturers' Hotlines

Manufacturer	Hotline Information
Gerber <i>Gerber Good Start</i>	<u>MyGerber Baby Expert</u>
Abbott <i>Similac</i> <i>Similac Elecare</i> <i>Alimentum</i>	Abbott's Consumer Hotline: 1-800-986-8540 Abbott's urgent <u>product request line</u>: Providers can submit an urgent product request by <u>downloading and completing the form - PDF</u>
Reckitt/Mead Johnson <i>Enfamil</i> <i>Nutramigen</i> <i>Pregestimil</i>	Reckitt's Customer Service line: 1-800 BABY-123 (222-9123)

Additional Resources:

- [MDH Fact Sheet](#)
- [MDH press release, date issued 5/16/2022](#)
- [Health and Human Service Fact Sheet](#)
- [Maryland WIC Program](#)
- [FDA Infant Safety Dos & Don'ts](#)
- [National Women's Hotline:](#) 1-800-994-9662
- [Maryland WIC Breastfeeding Resources](#)
- [National WIC through the United States Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Maryland Breastfeeding Coalition](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatric HealthyChildren.Org Information](#)

