

The Wellness Family

Dr. Leahy Keeps You Informed

Feeding Your Baby

A baby's body will develop and grow more in the first three years of his or her life than in all the years remaining. This emphasizes the fact that what a child ingests during these highly developmental years is of paramount importance.

There will never be a question that breastfeeding is best for your baby: a mother's milk is nature's perfect and complete food for her baby. There are 400 nutrients known to be present in breastmilk that are unable to be replicated and not found in substitutes, such as powdered infant formula.¹ Yet, the fact still remains: there will be times when breastfeeding is not an option or mothers will need to supplement. In this instance, it's important to have all of the facts.

PIFs – The Contamination Factor

The World Health Organization recently developed new guidelines for reconstituting powdered infant formula (PIF). WHO recommends that water should be boiled first, then cooled to 158°F (70°C), and then used to reconstitute the formula at that temperature. Higher temperatures were found to cause problems with the formula and lower temperatures were not able to kill the bacteria present in the powdered formula.

Enterobacter sakazakii is a bacterium that causes rare but severe infections associated with meningitis, necrotizing enterocolitis and sepsis in infants; with meningitis being the most frequently reported clinical symptom in neonatal *E. sakazakii* infections. Infants that developed meningitis were generally less than one week of age when they contracted the illness and were typically perfectly healthy until that point. After the onset of symptoms, they would frequently develop complications including seizures and brain abscesses with a 40% chance of mortality.

It has been determined through recent studies that reconstituted PIF is the source of several cases of these illnesses. The new guidelines developed by WHO were not meant to sterilize the water; the water isn't the problem, it's the formula that's contaminated.²

"When you say 'not breastfeeding is risky', what you're saying is 'using infant formula is risky,' and that is true and [the formula manufacturers] know it," said Dr. Jay Gordon, a pediatrician in Santa Monica, California, and a member of the breastfeeding committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Healthier Formula Options

While there is no way to recreate a mother's milk, it is possible to improve upon the standard formulas that are available by adding what they are lacking. For instance, most infant formulas are lacking a key nutritional component: fatty acid. With today's anti-fat message being so strong, most people aren't aware of its critical importance but we have only to consider that the brain is 60% lipid (fat).

For an infant to remain as healthy as possible, it's important for him or her to obtain a proper balance of the essential fats. While this is very difficult, it's not impossible to follow a "fat fortification protocol" as



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offered by Dr. Joseph Mercola the author of the Total Health Program.³

Dr. Mercola recommends adding the following to an infant's diet:

- Carlson's Cod Liver Oil - one cc per ten pounds of body weight
- Organic egg yolk - 1 yolk daily added at four months of age
- Organic cream - If you are unable to find a local dairy farmer who will cooperate with you please try this link: www.realmilk.com/where.html.
- Omega Nutrition pure sesame, walnut, safflower, sunflower, oils (rotate with above) - 1 tsp daily
- High quality coconut oil – 1 tsp daily. This needs to be heated to 76 degrees to become a liquid.

Recognizing that breastfeeding will always be best for your infant, if it's not possible, make sure that your child is getting everything they need from the formula being used. When necessary add what is missing under the direction of a nutritionist or ask your Family Wellness Chiropractor for more information.

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Supplementing and Introducing Solids

A common concern among new moms is that the baby isn't getting enough nutrition. If the baby is hungry every two hours this doesn't mean they aren't getting enough "food" with each feeding, they're just growing.

One of the worst things to do to an infant's digestive system is to introduce solids too soon. This may cause future food allergies as well as overtax the digestive tract and cause them to become "gassy" or "colicky".

Many parents, on the advice of family members and even pediatricians, have chosen to add "baby cereal" to the infant's formula or even mix it with expressed breastmilk to give the baby a "full tummy" so that he or she can "sleep through the night." Introducing solids before a baby is ready may cause more serious issues than a lack of sleep and is determined best by the maturity of the digestive system.

Gerber, Heinz, Beech-Nut or What?

Baby food has become a \$1.25 billion a year industry in the United Kingdom and most of North America. The average parent believes the manufacturers' slogans and somehow trusts that there is something special about "baby food" that makes it better for their infant than fresh fruits and vegetables found at the grocer. This is simply not true.⁴

A recent study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest proved that baby food is more water and filler than food. Take for instance, the popular "Bananas and Tapioca", which contain only 50% bananas. The rest is water, sugar and modified starch. Baby food bought in jars at the store is simply high priced junk food.⁵

What's best for baby?

Until a child is six months old, breastmilk is best; after that it's advised to begin your child on simple fruits and

vegetables. Introduce one new item at a time over several days; first, to see how the baby responds to each new food item and, secondly, to allow the baby's digestive system to adapt to the change.

When it comes to selecting fruits and vegetables, it's best to start with those that can be cooked and then mashed into a sauce. Pears, peaches or apples are great fruits, and carrots, sweet potatoes, zucchini and squash are the best choices for vegetables.

Avoid berries as they can cause allergic responses and, while bananas aren't bad, be aware that they are binding and may interfere with your child's regular bowel movements.

Avoid wheat right away and do not feed your baby white flour products. White flour (bread and pasta) have gone through a bleaching process, which leaves little or no nutritional value in the product.

In addition, it's wise to avoid milk products all together, but at least until after age one. Dairy products produce mucus and often create allergic responses; not to mention that they are filled with hormones and antibiotics. Rice milk and almond milk are better but, as with all other food items, should be introduced slowly.¹

In Summary

Breastfeeding is best but, if it's not possible, then seek healthier choices for your child. Your baby is growing and developing at an astonishing rate and it's vital that the building blocks you provide are the best.

Resources:

1. www.icpa4kids.org/research/children/breastfeedingalternatives.htm
2. www.icpa4kids.org/wellness/0002.htm
3. www.mercola.com/2000/oct/22/infant_formula.html
4. www.nutritionadvocate.com/story/is_gerber.html
5. www.cspinet.org/reports/cheat1.html

Dear Parent,

Dr. Leahy is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. Take a moment today to ask your Family Wellness Chiropractor any questions you may have regarding your child's nutritional needs.

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