

Fact Sheet

Bottle-feeding – Cleaning and sterilising equipment

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A baby's immune system is developing in the first 12 months of life and therefore they are at risk of developing infection.

Powdered Infant formula is not a sterile product and germs grow rapidly in made up infant formula.

It is important that all bottle feeding equipment is cleaned and then sterilised until your baby is 12 months old.

Equipment you will need:

- a bottle brush to clean bottles, teats and caps
- access to a clean sink and warm water
- commercial dishwashing liquid
- sterilising equipment(see below)

Cleaning and Sterilising Equipment

- Wash your hands
- Wash bottles, teats, dummies (if used) and utensils in warm soapy water
- Clean around the screw top of the bottles with a bottle brush. Buy a new bottle brush and only use it for the baby's feeding equipment
- Rinse bottles, teats and utensils thoroughly- remove all traces of formula

There are different ways of disinfecting bottles, teats and feeding utensils:

Boiling method:

- using a large saucepan with a lid

- cover the bottles, teats, dummies and utensils with water
- bring the water to the boil and boil for five minutes
- allow to cool
- wash hands and remove bottles and teats from the saucepan
- put caps and teats on the bottles
- place the bottles for storing in the back of the fridge. They can be stored like this for 24 hours. If not used within 24 hours, the bottles, teats and caps will need rewashing and disinfecting again.

Steam sterilisers – electric:

- all feeding equipment must be cleaned as above
- these are automatic units and it is important to follow the instructions
- the temperature during the sterilisation process will be high enough to kill harmful bacteria
- place bottles, teats and caps into the sterilising unit
- add water according to manufacturer's instructions
- switch on
- when process completed, Wash your hands and remove bottles, teats and caps
- place the caps and teats on the bottles (as above).



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Steam steriliser – microwave:

- all feeding equipment must be cleaned as above
- place equipment into the unit
- add water according to manufacturer's instructions
- Place in microwave and heat for recommended time
- when process completed, take care when removing the sterilising unit from the microwave as the surface of the sterilising unit and the water in the unit will be HOT and may cause burns
- wash your hands and remove bottles, teats and caps
- place the caps and teats on the bottles (as above)
- the effectiveness of the microwave steam steriliser has not been supported by research at this time and may cause rapid ageing of the bottles and teats.

Cold water chemical disinfection:

- use a plastic, non-transparent container that is deep enough to cover all equipment
- prepare the solution as per manufacturer's instructions
- completely immerse all equipment into the solution, making sure there no air bubbles in teats or bottles
- leave equipment soaking in solution for at least 15 minutes

- wash hands, remove equipment from the solution, shake dry, put caps and teats on the bottles

DO NOT RINSE

- place the bottles for storing in the back of the fridge. They can be stored like this for 24 hours. If not used within 24 hours, the bottles, teats and caps will need rewashing and disinfecting again
- the container needs emptying, washing and rinsing
- the solution needs to be changed daily.

Cold water chemical solution will rust metal and will not kill all micro-organisms. Boiling and steam sterilisation will kill all micro-organisms

Bottle Feeding- Preparing baby's feeds.

It is important to follow the instructions on the tin of infant formula. The steps to make infant formula listed below, help to reduce the risk of infection in your baby:

- make up the bottle of infant formula just before you feed your baby- one bottle at a time
- if other people are making up infant formula for your baby, it is important that they know how to do it correctly and safely
- wash your hands
- ensure the feeding equipment is clean and has been disinfected(see above)

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- boil cold water in an electric kettle or jug, or in a kettle or saucepan on the stove. Cold water from the tap is safe to use, if it is safe to drink. Commercial bottled water is not recommended due to salts that may be present)
- if using an automatic kettle, wait until the kettle switches off, Otherwise make sure the water is bubbling. It is not safe to reboil the water as this concentrates the mineral salts in the water
- allow the water to cool and pour into the bottle
- never use a microwave as this alters the formula and may overheat the milk risking burning the baby

Using the correct scoop, add the appropriate number of scoops of the powder to the water

- fill the scoop, do not press down on the scoop as this can concentrate the formula
- level the scoop off
- always add only the correct number of scoops
- too many scoops can cause unhealthy weight gain and stress your baby's kidneys
- too few scoops can cause inadequate weight gain and/or an unsettled baby
- shake the bottle to dissolve the powder

Before feeding the baby, make sure the formula is the right temperature by shaking a few drops onto the inside of your wrist. The temperature should be between room temperature and body temperature (37°C).

If the milk needs warming, place the bottle in a container with hot water

Bottle Feeding Video-Available in 14 languages.

A short video (see website below) shows you how to prepare baby formula and expressed breast milk for bottle-feeding to newborns and young babies.

[Bottle-feeding babies: equipment and formula](#)

Sourced from the Raising Children website, Australia's trusted parenting website. For more parenting information, visit www.raisingchildren.net.au.

We welcome further feedback on this brochure as a way of continually improving our service.

Send your feedback to:

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