

PARENTING IN MANITOBA

FORMULA FEEDING YOUR BABY IN AN EMERGENCY: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

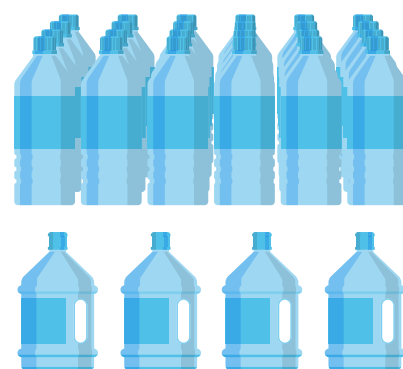
Emergencies and disasters can happen suddenly and without warning. They may leave you and your family without electricity, clean drinking water or transportation. These events can be caused by severe weather, disease outbreaks, floods, wildfires or other hazards.

Babies are especially at-risk during emergencies. That's why it is important to have a plan for how you will feed your baby if you lose power, don't have clean water or if you need to evacuate your home and go to a reception centre or shelter.

Safe feeding practices are the most important way to protect your baby from getting sick during an emergency. The way you prepare for an emergency will depend on how you normally feed your baby.

Be Prepared Before an Emergency:

- Try to keep at least a three-day supply of **ready-to-feed formula** at home in case of an emergency.
- **If you use powdered or liquid concentrate infant formula:**
 - Have a three-day supply of the formula your baby uses.
 - Keep enough bottled water to make the formula:
 - Most babies will need around one litre of water per day to prepare formula.
 - Have a 24-bottle flat of bottled water or several 4L (gallon) jugs on hand.
 - Make sure you have enough bottles and nipples.
 - Keep supplies to wash bottles and nipples, like soap and a clean brush.



Feeding your Baby:

- Hold your baby skin to skin to provide comfort and warmth.
- Wash your hands before making formula and before feeding your baby.
- If you don't have soap and clean water, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- To clean bottles, see the next page - Cleaning Bottles in Special Situations
- To make formula, see next page - Making Formula in Special Situations

Storing Formula Safely:

- Prepared formula must be kept in the refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) and used within 24 hours.
- If you do not have power, use single serve, **ready-to-feed formula**.

Take care of yourself

A quiet, private place to feed your baby will help with the stress and distraction. Connecting with other parents can provide emotional support making it easier for you to care for your baby and other children during a stressful event.

Resources:

If you have questions about feeding your baby contact:

- Your public health nurse: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/offices.html>
- Health Links-Info Santé: 204-788-8209 (in Winnipeg); toll free 1-888-315-9257 (outside Winnipeg); Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- Dial-a-Dietitian: 204-788-8248 (in Winnipeg); toll free 1-877-830-2892. Hours: Monday to Friday – 8 am to 4 pm

References:

Grey Bruce Public Health Unit: [Feeding Your Baby in an Emergency.pdf](#)

Nova Scotia Public Health Unit: [Infant Feeding Emergency Preparedness for Parents and Caregivers](#)



Check us out anytime
parentinginmanitoba.ca



Important: Use the instructions below **only in emergencies when you do not have the equipment you normally have and a kitchen to clean feeding equipment and make formula.** If you are not in an emergency, follow proper sterilizing methods for feeding equipment- <https://parentinginmanitoba.ca/how-to-sterilize-your-formula-feeding-equipment/> and follow the instructions on the package to make formula. If you are staying at a shelter or hotel, ask staff if they have the equipment you need to sterilize and make formula such as a pot and stove or a kettle.

CLEANING BABY BOTTLES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS

• When you don't have a kitchen • Staying in a hotel or boarding home • In an emergency



1. WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER.



2. CLEAN BOTTLE AND NIPPLE WITH HOT SOAPY WATER.

Clean bottles and nipples. If you are **re-using** the ready-to feed infant formula bottles it is important to clean them.



3. RINSE BOTTLE AND NIPPLE WITH WARM WATER.

Place them on a clean surface to dry.



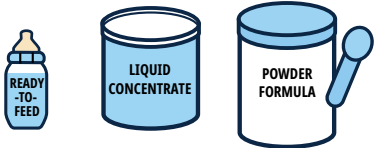
4. YOUR BOTTLES ARE NOW READY TO ADD FORMULA.

MAKING FORMULA FOR YOUR BABY IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS

• When you don't have a kitchen • Staying in a hotel or boarding home • In an emergency

1. Types of formula

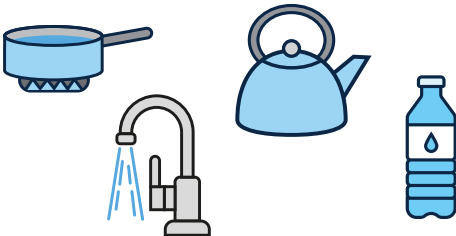
If you have ready-to-feed formula, it is the best choice. If you have it, go to step 4. If not, continue to step 2.



2. Water Options

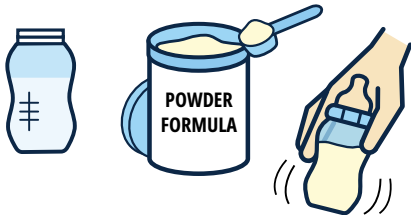
Find out if the tap water is safe to drink in your community. If there is a water advisory, you might be given bottled water. Bottled water is not sterile, so boil it before making formula.

- a) **If tap water IS safe, or there is a boil water advisory:**
 - Run the cold water tap for 2 minutes.
 - If you have a pot and a portable cooktop, boil the water at a rolling boil for 2 minutes. If you have a kettle, boil the water until it shuts off.
- b) **If tap water is NOT safe, use bottled water:**
 - If you have a pot and a portable cooktop, boil the bottled water for 2 minutes. If you have a kettle, boil the water until it shuts off.
- c) **If you can't boil water, use ready-to-feed formula.**



3. Making the formula: follow the mixing instructions that come with the formula

- a) **Formula powder or single serve:** Powder formula is **not sterile**, it needs to be mixed with water that has been **boiled and cooled for 30 minutes, not longer.**
 - Always add the cooled, boiled water first, then use the scoop that comes in the can to add the powder.
 - Shake the bottle well before feeding. If feeding immediately ensure the temperature is safe for baby.
 - If you have a fridge you can store and use within 24 hours. If you do not have a fridge feed formula bottle immediately.
- b) **Liquid concentrate formula:** Only use this type of formula if you have a fridge.
 - Cool the boiled water to room temperature, pour it into a jar and put the lid on. This water can be used immediately or kept at room temperature for 24 hours or in a fridge for 2-3 days.
 - Wipe the top of the can, and shake it before opening.
 - Mix water with formula and prepare bottle. Feed immediately when temperature is safe or put bottles in the fridge
 - Use prepared bottles within 24 hours. Do not leave bottles standing at room temperature.
 - Put a tight lid on any unused liquid concentrate and store in the fridge. Use the leftover liquid concentrate within 48 hours.



4. Throw away any formula that your baby doesn't finish.

