

INFANT FORMULA SHORTAGE

CONNECTICUT AGENCY ACTIONS & UPDATES

The recent nationwide infant formula shortage has created an extremely challenging situation for families who rely on infant formula. In response, the federal government continues to bring in formulas from abroad. In addition, the FDA continues to review and approve new imported products as safe and nutritionally adequate, with formula produced in Spain, the UK, Germany, and Australia recently approved for importation. Connecticut state agencies are working together to support families with young children.

FEDERAL ACTIONS & UPDATES

The Biden-Harris Administration is working with manufacturers to ramp up production, and with retailers to ensure that infant formula is safe and available for families across the country. These are the key efforts from the federal levels:

- ◆ Under Operation Fly Formula, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the General Services Administration (GSA) are partnering to import infant formula from other nations that meets U.S. health and safety standards, so it can get to store shelves faster.
- ◆ The FDA is using enforcement discretion to import about 696,000 cans or about 21 million full-size, 8 oz. bottles of Bellamy's Organic: Organic Infant Formula Step 1 (0-6 months) and Bellamy's Organic: Organic Follow-On Formula Step 2 (6-12 months) from Australia beginning in July.
- ◆ On June 28, one flight will arrive from Australia into Los Angeles International Airport, carrying Bubs Organic infant formula.
- ◆ On July 1, one flight will arrive from the Netherlands into Newark Liberty International Airport, carrying Nestle infant formula.
- ◆ By July 3, Operation Fly Formula flights will have completed 37 flights and imported more than 37.2 million 8 oz. bottle equivalents of infant formula.
- ◆ Abbott Nutrition will reserve a portion of the inventory to provide product for critical needs free of charge to Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) agencies. Abbott will also use online outlets (Similac.com, Abbottstore.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com, Target.com, and others) to maximize availability nationwide for the balance of the product.
- ◆ Per the FDA, the Abbott facility in Sturgis, MI, that was closed due to flooding earlier in June will resume production as soon as June 30. Some Elecare specialty formulas will be released immediately that were produced before the flood, and more will be released beginning July 14.

RESOURCES

The latest update from the White House can be found at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/formula/>

Families looking for safe substitutes for speciality formulas can refer to the North American Society For Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition (NASPGHAN) Tools for Infants and Children Affected by Formula Shortages:

<https://naspghan.org/recent-news/naspghan-tools-for-hcps-affected-by-formula-recall/>

Connecticut has created an infant formula fact sheet with tips, guidance, and resources. This has been shared statewide and utilized by families:

ctoec.org/news/infant-formula-shortage-tips-and-resources-for-ct-families

For further information about federal actions, the public is encouraged to visit: hhs.gov/formula

For additional information on the infant formula supply:

<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/infant-formula-supply>

For WIC's full list of formula substitutes, visit <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/WIC/WIC>.

Refer to this new consumer education resource from the AAP on imported formula:

https://downloads.aap.org/HC/ImportedFormula_FB.jpg

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DPH

WIC continues to add new formulas to their formula list to allow wider choices, with over 90 new formula products now available to participants.

Local agency staff are working with families and providers to identify options and find stores with available products.

WIC has added language to their website about carefully reading instructions before mixing to ensure families know that there are differences when using imported formulas.

Gerber confirmed that their Germany imports – Nestle NAN Expert Pro, Nestle NAN Supreme Pro 1, and Nestle NAN Supreme Pro 2 – are only available through e-Commerce. This is due to limited supply and their ability to provide detailed instructions on mixing, which is different from domestic formulas.

WIC has provided a list of approved substitutes for the recalled Similac products if the Similac product you normally purchase is not available. For WIC's full list of formula substitutes, visit <https://portal.ct.gov/dph/WIC/WIC>.

The WIC Program has added two new imported formulas to our formulary: Bubs Supreme A2 Beta Casein Protein Stage 1 (0-6 months) and Bubs Supreme A2 Beta Casein Protein Stage 2 (6-12 months). These are a good substitute for Similac Total Comfort, which has been widely unavailable (as well as other domestic comparable products). We have heard these products will be distributed through Walmart and have added the products in preparation for their arrival on shelves.

WIC and non-WIC families have been looking for specialty formulas, including Nutramigen, Puramino, and Similac Alimentum. Unfortunately, these products are seemingly more difficult to find recently. We continue to provide as much support as we can to these families, but without product available, we are referring families to their health care provider for guidance when their usual formula or an appropriate substitute is not available.

DSS

Serves 36,750 infants receiving SNAP

Status: SNAP is flexible on formula brand and can be purchased online

DSS is working in partnership with CT Food Association to provide the following updates:

Similac Advance 12.4 oz. will remain widely available. Customers should be able to find in stores and warehouses reliably. This is Similac's highest volume powdered formula item and the highest volume powdered under the WIC umbrella in Connecticut. A customer can purchase up to 4 units of Similac Advance (we have a purchase limit of 4 right now).

Disruptions to Similac's supply chain have caused retailers and consumers to shift demand to alternative brands like Mead Johnson's Enfamil, Gerber Good Start, and Private Labels – this unexpected demand has resulted in supply shortages on these brands. Mead Johnson has only made their limited supplies of product available to states where Enfamil is a primary WIC brand. They expect to begin loosening these restrictions in the next 2-3 weeks.

Special dietary items like Similac "Alimentum," "Neosure," and "Advance Pro," continue to be in short supply. Unfortunately, these can only be manufactured in Abbott's Sturgis facility, which had restarted on June 4, but suffered significant storm damage last week that took the plant offline again.

The rebound of formula supply will be contingent on how fast Abbott can restore their Sturgis factory and begin production of those specialty formula items.

Based upon historical demand and current projections, Abbott has ample existing supply of EleCare, and most of its specialty and metabolic formulas to meet needs for these products until new product is available. These products are being released to consumers in need in coordination with healthcare professionals. Parents or caregivers in need should contact their healthcare professional or contact Abbott at +1-800-881-0876 for additional information.