

SECTION: Nutrition Services**SUBJECT: Food Package Prescription**

Federal Regulation: §246.10 (e) (10)**Nutrition Services Standard:** 13

There are seven food packages available under the WIC Program.

A competent professional authority (CPA) on the staff of the local agency shall prescribe a food package for each WIC participant at certification or when a food package change is needed.

The food package shall be based on the participant's category, age, nutrition assessment, health status, living accommodations, access to food storage/cooking facilities, and in some instances on basis of personal preferences (i.e. vegan families).

The amount and types of foods prescribed for a participant shall not exceed maximum allowable quantities.

Food packages shall not be tailored for cost reasons.

Food Package Changes

If a participant's nutritional needs warrant a food package change or if the participant requests a change, a CPA shall prescribe a new food package, determining the types and quantities of food desired.

Selecting the Appropriate Food Package/Food Package Tailoring Guidelines**A. GENERAL GUIDELINES**

1. Start from the standard food package and adjust the amounts of individual food as necessary.
2. Address the specific needs (nutritional, homeless, lack of cooking or refrigeration appliances) of participants in tailoring food packages.
3. Reassess the food package assignment at **each** certification, or **more often**, as participants need change and/or if they do not redeem all their benefits.
4. Review the benefit of the food package and reiterate that the food package is intended for use by only the participant. Violation of this agreement can result in disqualification from the program. Ensure that the participant knows that there is an option to select/omit food items when a need is identified. Food items should be tailored down or eliminated if the items cannot or will not be utilized appropriately by the participant, even if there is not an allowable substitution. **Documentation should reflect justification for this decision.** Elimination should only occur after appropriate education and other creative ways for incorporating food item into the participant's diet has been explored.
5. Consider the current U.S. Dietary Guidelines when prescribing food packages, unless contraindicated by special nutritional needs.
6. For exceptions see item C, SPECIAL FOOD PACKAGE SITUATIONS in this document.

<p>Children</p> <p>Women</p>	<p>Authorized supplemental food: WIC infant formula, exempt infant formula or WIC eligible nutritional, infant cereal, infant fruits and vegetables (when puree food is required), breakfast cereal, juice, milk (whole milk beyond one year old with medical documentation), cheese, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole wheat/whole grain bread, juice, legumes and/or peanut butter.</p> <p>Authorized supplemental food: WIC eligible nutritional, breakfast cereal, infant fruits and vegetables (when puree food is required), juice, milk (whole milk if prescribed by medical provider), cheese, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole wheat/whole grain bread, juice, legumes and/or peanut butter, and canned fish for fully breastfeeding women.</p>
<p>*Food Package III is not authorized for infants whose only condition is: a diagnosed formula intolerance or food allergy to lactose, sucrose, milk protein or soy protein that does not require the use of an exempt infant formula; or a non-specific formula or food intolerance. Also, is not authorized for women and children who have a food intolerance to lactose or milk protein that can be successfully managed with the use of one of the other WIC food packages; Or, any participant solely for the purpose of enhancing nutrient intake or managing body weight without an underlying qualifying condition.</p>	
<p>Food Package IV</p>	<p>For children 1 through 4 years. Tailor quantities of milk, cereal, whole grain bread, juice and eggs according to the nutritional needs of the child and other identified circumstances.</p>
<p>Age 12 to 23 months</p> <p>Children over 2 years old</p>	<p>Authorized supplemental food: juice, breakfast cereal, milk, tailor out cheese only 1 pound per month and 1 quart of approved yogurt, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole wheat/whole grain bread, dry or canned legumes and or peanut butter.</p> <p>Whole milk is standard, lower fat milk requires medical documentation.</p> <p>Low fat milk or skim milk is standard, the issuance of whole milk requires medical documentation. To justify the issuance of 2% reduced fat milk a thorough nutrition assessment is required to identify a nutrition risk followed by CT-WIC documentation progress note by the nutritionist.</p> <p>When it is determined that a child is underweight, provide adequate food package and encourage inclusion of frequent nutrient-dense snacks. Refer to CT State WIC Policy 300-14 Non Standard Issuance of Milks (Whole Milk, 2%, 1%, Skim).</p>

Food Package V	For singleton pregnancy and breastfeeding partially (mostly) women up to 1 year post-partum
	<p>Authorized supplemental food: juice, breakfast cereal, milk, tailor out cheese only 1 pound per month and 1 quart of approved yogurt, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole wheat/whole grain bread, dry or canned legumes and or peanut butter.</p> <p>Tailor quantities of milk, breakfast cereal, whole wheat/whole grain bread, juice, fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs, legumes and peanut butter according to the nutritional needs of the woman and other identified circumstances.</p> <p>Provide a food package with reduced fat to pregnant and breastfeeding women to meet appropriate weight gain goals.</p> <p>Provide an energy rich food package to underweight women and encourage consumption of frequent nutritious snacks.</p>
Food Package VI	For non-breastfeeding post-partum women, up to 6 months post-partum.
	<p>Authorized supplemental food: juice, breakfast cereal, milk, tailor out cheese only 1 pound per month and 1 quart of approved yogurt, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole wheat/whole grain bread, dry or canned legumes and or peanut butter. Tailor quantities of milk, breakfast cereal, juice, fresh fruit and vegetables, eggs, legumes and peanut butter according to the nutritional needs of the woman and other identified circumstances.</p> <p>Provide low fat 1% or skim milk to post- partum women to facilitate a return to a healthy weight.</p> <p>Provide an energy rich food package to underweight women and encourage consumption of frequent nutritious snacks.</p>
Food Package VII	<p>For fully/exclusively breastfeeding women for up to 1 year post-partum and breastfeeding partially (mostly) more than one infant from the same pregnancy.</p> <p>For pregnant women fully or partially breastfeeding singleton infants.</p> <p>For women participants pregnant with two or more fetuses.</p>
	<p>Authorized supplemental food: juice, breakfast cereal, milk (milk can be substituted with 2 lbs of cheese or a combination of cheese and yogurt),* eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole wheat/whole grain bread, dry or canned legumes and or peanut butter.</p> <p>Tailor quantities of milk, cheese, breakfast cereal, whole wheat/ whole grain bread, juice, fresh fruits and vegetables, legumes, peanut butter, eggs, and canned fish, according to the nutritional needs of the woman and other identified circumstances.</p> <p>Provide low fat 1% or skim milk to a breastfeeding women to facilitate a return to a healthy weight.</p> <p>Provide an energy rich food package to underweight women and encourage consumption of frequent nutritious snacks.</p>

Milk, breakfast cereal, juice, fruits and vegetables, whole wheat/whole grain products, eggs, and legumes/peanut butter are the categories of supplemental foods authorized in the standard food package for women and children. Per Federal Regulations cheese and yogurt

are allowable substitutions for milk. Currently, in CT-WIC the default food packages include cheese and yogurt. Since the default packages include the substitutions, participants must be informed of all available options. Staff should educate participants on the standard food package and the allowable substitutions and adjust amounts of individual foods as necessary. *Staff must educate participants on how to reach their full maximum benefit. For juice women can reach their full maximum benefit by purchasing concentrated juice. For the women categories, if fluid juice is redeemed the full juice benefit will not be reached. When a food package is tailored to meet the individuals needs staff must clearly document the rationale for tailoring.*
See Local Agency WIC Food Purchasing Conversion Chart.

**For children and women, cheese may be substituted for milk at the rate of 1 pound of cheese per 3 quarts of milk. For children and women in Food Packages IV-VI, no more than 1 pound of cheese may be substituted. For fully breastfeeding women in Food Package VII, no more than 2 pounds of cheese may be substituted for milk.*

**For children and women, yogurt may be substituted for fluid milk at the rate of 1 quart of yogurt per 1 quart of milk; a maximum of 1 quart of milk can be substituted.*

**No more than a total of 4 quarts of milk may be substituted for a combination of cheese, yogurt or tofu for children and women in Food Packages IV-VI.*

See WIC 300-02 Attachment: Total Milk Substitutions Cheese, Yogurt and Tofu for details on appropriate substitutions and conversions.

C. SPECIAL FOOD PACKAGES SITUATIONS

Ready-To-Feed Formulas for Infants

Local agencies must issue all WIC formulas (WIC formulas mean all infant formula, exempt infant formula and WIC-eligible nutritionals) in concentrated liquid or powder physical forms. Ready-to-feed WIC formulas may be authorized when the competent professional authority determines and documents one or more of the following conditions:

- The participant's household has an unsanitary or restricted water supply or poor refrigeration;
- The person caring for the participant may have difficulty in correctly diluting concentrated or powder forms; or
- The WIC infant formula is only available in ready-to-feed.

In Food Package III two additional conditions are:

- If a ready-to-feed form better accommodates the participant's conditions; or
- If it improves the participant's compliance in consuming the prescribed WIC formula.

Refer to CT State WIC Policy 400-10 for more details on ready to feed formulas in Food Package III.

Food Package for Developmental Delay at 6 months of age

Must issue Food Package III. A completed medical documentation by the HCP indicating a medical diagnosis of developmental delay, is required to issue an increased amount of infant formula in the 6 month package. The nutritionist should contact the HCP/pediatrician for an appropriate diagnosis

when the WIC nutrition assessment indicates inadequate caloric intake and/or developmental delay affecting the ability to eat solid infant foods, since the identified reasons for developmental delay may vary: for example, prematurity, malabsorption requiring semi-elemental formula, esophageal obstruction requiring liquids only, etc. The contact with the HCP can help the Nutritionist to verify the rationale for the diagnosis and increase in infant formula.

Cash Value Vouchers (CVV) for Infants 9 months to 11 months

This package can be offered after an individual nutrition assessment is performed for food acceptance and feeding preference method. The options are as follows:

- The maximum allowance of infant jarred fruits and vegetables is assigned and issued **OR**
- A combination of infant jarred fruits and vegetables and a CVV for the infant consisting of fresh fruits and vegetables is assigned and issued. When a combination is chosen, the following is allowed:
 - Partially (mostly and limited) breastfed infants and fully formula infants receives a \$4 CVV and 64 ounces of infant food fruits and vegetables (or 16 jars of infant fruits and vegetables)
 - Exclusive and fully breastfeeding infants receive an \$8 CVV and 128 ounces of infant food fruit and vegetables (or 32 jars of infant fruits and vegetables).

Food Package requiring Infant Formula at 12 months of age and beyond

Must issue Food Package III. All formula provided to a child based on chronological age (regardless if the corrected age places them as an infant) requires a doctor's prescription and will require a completed medical documentation form. In Food Package III child participants with qualifying conditions receives both WIC formula AND all appropriate WIC supplemental foods that are not contraindicated by their medical condition.

Also, if a participant is an infant by developmental age but child by chronological age, they will need to be recertified at one year of chronological age. This requires an updated certification and medical documentation form from the health care provider (HCP).

Soy Toddler Formula

Must issue Food Package III. Issuance of WIC eligible nutritionals requires an ICD-10 code and a completed WIC medical documentation form. Mead Johnson Enfagrow Soy Toddler 24 oz. powder and Gerber Good Start Stage 3 Soy 24 oz. powder are approved for 1-2 year olds as an alternative to milk with documented cow's milk allergy or lactose intolerance.

Issuance of Whole Milk

The issuance of whole milk to a child over 2 years of age requires medical documentation. The child must be in Food Package III, with a qualified medical condition that also requires a WIC Special Formula or WIC eligible medical nutritional. In a circumstance in which only whole milk is prescribed the nutritionist must contact the HCP to clarify the prescription. It should be explained to the provider the negligible difference between the fat content of 2% milk and whole milk to see if a compromise can be worked out. Refer to CT State WIC Policy 300-14 Non Standard Issuance of Milks (Whole Milk, 2%, 1%, Skim).

Issuance of Lactose-Reduce or Lactose-Free Milk

A medical documentation form is not required to provide Lactose Reduced or Lactose Free milk in place of regular cows' milk. The nutritionist shall communicate with the child's healthcare provider the request for lactose free, or lactose reduced milk to ensure accurate implementation of healthcare provider's recommendations. It is important to verify that the intolerance is due to lactose intolerance and not milk allergy, as treatment for milk allergy is different than for lactose intolerance. A Medical Documentation form can be used for this purpose. Proper documentation of this action steps taken by the nutritionist is also advisable.

Soy Milk

For children and women, soy milk may be issued without medical documentation. For children, issuance of soy milk (or tofu) does not require a qualifying medical condition or ICD-10 code, since the determination of soy based beverage will be based on individual nutrition assessment and if needed in consultation with the health care provider. Rationales may include milk allergy, lactose intolerance, severe lactose mal-digestion, vegan diets and religious preference.

Children ages 12 months to 23 months are eligible to receive regular soymilk (which contains 5 grams of fat per 8 ounces cup. Due to the fact that regular soy milk has less fat than whole milk, Nutrition staff should discuss this with parents or caretakers of these children as they may need to include additional fat to the diet. Additional fat can be added in the form of oil or butter of slightly more than 1 teaspoon (5 grams of fat) to compensate for the reduced fat in soy milk (2 cups of soy milk has 10 grams of fat, but 2 cups of whole milk has 16 grams of fat).

Women and children 2 years old and older must receive fat free/non-fat, low fat soymilk.

Refer to CT State WIC Policy 300-14 Non Standard Issuance of Milks (Whole Milk, 2%, 1%, Skim).

Issuance of UHT Milk

In Connecticut WIC the issuance of shelf stable/UHT Milk is assigned by the CPA when is determined that the family is facing special situations such as inadequate storage, homelessness, disasters, and to meet participant's preference for consuming milk.