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Adventures in Grandparenting

Preparing and Handling Infant Formula

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Purchasing

- Make sure the label says "with iron" or "iron-fortified."
- Do not purchase cans with dents, bulges, pinched tops or bottoms, leaks or rust spots.
- Make sure the formula is not past the expiration date.

Storage

- Store unopened cans in a cool, dry place (not the refrigerator, garage or car).
- If brought by parents, label with baby's name and date of preparation and store in hard plastic bottles.
- Transport prepared formula in a cooler.
- Refrigerate prepared bottles until ready to use, and use within 48 hours.
- Do not allow prepared bottles to sit at room temperature, and do not feed a baby a bottle left out of the refrigerator for 1 hour or longer.
- Open cans of formula should be covered, refrigerated and used within 48 hours.
- Do not freeze formula.
- Throw out any unused formula left in a bottle after a feeding.
- Do not reuse a bottle containing formula after a baby has fed from it.

Water

- Use a safe, approved source of water for preparing concentrate or powdered formula. If you are not sure if it is approved by the local health department, you should have the health department test your water.
- Always sterilize the water by boiling it for one to two minutes and letting it cool.
- If tap water is used, allow it to run for 1 minute and then collect the water.

Preparation

- Clean and sanitize work space.
- Wash hands with soap and water.
- Wash all equipment in hot, soapy water and rinse in hot water.
- Disinfect nipples, bottles, rings and caps by boiling for 5 minutes, and air dry.
- If disposable liners are used, throw out the bag after one use.
- Concentrate or powdered formula must be prepared according to the directions on the label.

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- Do not put cereal in a bottle because this interferes with the baby's ability to get the right amount of nutrients, forces the baby to eat cereal and may cause the baby to choke.
- Warm bottles by running warm water over the bottle, and test temperature.
- Never use a microwave to heat the bottles. It can get the liquid too hot and burn the baby and can destroy nutrients.

Bottle-Feeding an Infant

It may seem that bottle-feeding an infant would be common sense, but there are many important things to remember that may not come so naturally.

Guidelines for Bottle-Feeding an Infant

- Wash your hands well with soap and water before feeding.
- Gently and slowly calm and position the infant for feeding.
- Cradle the baby in your arms, holding it partially upright. The baby's head should be a little higher than the rest of his/her body. This prevents milk from backing up into the inner ear and also prevents choking.
- Hold the bottle during feeding. Do not prop the bottle. Propping bottles can cause choking and suffocation, ear infections and tooth decay and can deprive the baby of important human contact.
- Feed in a smooth and continuous fashion following the baby's lead on when to feed, how long to feed and how much to feed. Avoid disrupting the feeding with unnecessary burping, wiping, juggling and arranging.
- Make sure that if you hold the bottle upside down, falling drops from the nipple hole follow each other closely but do not make a stream.
- Do not allow a baby to carry a bottle around. Babies who carry a bottle around can develop cavities, may drink too much liquid and may share their bottles with other babies.
- Do not offer the bottle in bed at nap or sleep time. Allowing babies to sleep with a bottle can lead to choking, ear infections, cavities and problems with speech.
- Wait for the baby to stop drinking before burping. Do not be surprised if the baby does not burp.

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