Deciding how to feed your 6- to 9-month-old isn’t always easy. Breastfeeding is best for your child’s growth and development. But sometimes, for medical or personal reasons, store-bought infant formula is used instead of, or in addition to, human milk.

If You Use Formula

Breastfeed, too, if you can
Give your child human milk whenever possible. If you feed your child formula, try to give it in addition to your own milk (see Supplementing for 6- to 9-Month-Olds).

If you’re not currently breastfeeding but hope to breastfeed your child in the future, talk with your health care provider about how to keep up your milk supply. Or find a lactation coach through the British Columbia Lactation Consultants Association (bclca.ca).

Use formula safely
Talk with your health care provider or the public health nurse or call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1 to learn how to prepare and store formula safely.

Did You Know

The World Health Organization, Health Canada, Dietitians of Canada, the Canadian Paediatric Society and the B.C. Ministry of Health all recommend that babies be fed only human milk for the first 6 months. After your baby is eating solid family foods, human milk remains an important source of nutrition. If possible, continue to breastfeed until your child is 2 years or older.

DANGER

If you use infant formula, choose only store-bought cow’s milk-based varieties (or store-bought soy-based formula, if your child can’t have cow’s milk-based). Other beverages don’t provide the nutrition your 6- to 9-month-old needs.

Never use these in place of infant formula for your 6- to 9-month-old:

✘ evaporated or condensed milk
✘ cow’s milk or goat’s milk
✘ nut “milks,” like almond, cashew and coconut drinks
✘ other “milks,” like rice, potato, soy and hemp drinks

BE AWARE

Using a home machine to prepare infant formula can be unsafe. The machine may not heat the water enough to kill any bacteria the formula might contain, and it may not dispense the right amount of powder.
KEY TAKEAWAY
Although human milk is best for your 6- to 9-month-old, sometimes formula is necessary. If you need to use formula but feel uncomfortable or guilty about doing so, talk with your health care provider. And remember that no matter how you feed your child, you can use feeding times to build a close and loving bond.

In areas where the level of manganese in drinking water is too high, use another source of water to make infant formula. Don’t drink or use discoloured water to prepare food or infant formula until your water’s safety is confirmed.

DID YOU KNOW
If you have concerns about your drinking water, contact your health authority. Visit gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/water-quality/drinking-water-quality/health-authority-contacts.