

GUIDELINES FOR FEEDING INFANTS

TALLAHASSEE – In the event of a hurricane, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) encourages new mothers to adhere to these guidelines:

Breastfeeding

- Mothers who are breastfeeding should continue to breastfeed their babies. Mother's milk has everything a baby needs to grow well in the first six months of life.
- Mothers who are both breastfeeding and formula feeding their infants should breastfeed as much as possible in place of bottle feeding.
- Formula should only be used when mothers are unable to breastfeed.

Feeding with Infant Formula

- Infant formula should be prepared according to the directions on the formula label and as instructed by the baby's health care provider.
- All baby bottles and nipples must be washed and sterilized before each use. If this is not possible, then single-serve, ready-to-feed bottles of formula must be used with a sterilized nipple.
- **Ready-to-feed formula** does not need mixing and water should not be added. Just remember that once a can of ready-to-feed formula is opened it must be refrigerated and should be used within 24 hours or as specified on the infant formula label.
- Always boil water before mixing **concentrated liquid or powdered formula**. Boiling water is the best way to make water safe to drink. Cold tap water or bottled water (except sterilized bottled water) must be boiled vigorously for 1 minute, allowed to cool, and then mixed with powdered or concentrated liquid formula following directions on the formula label. Once formula is mixed, it must be refrigerated and used within 24 hours or as specified on the formula label. If refrigeration is not available, mix formula each time baby is ready to eat and then discard extra formula.
- **Sterilized bottled water** does not need to be boiled before mixing with concentrated liquid or powdered formula.
- If unable to boil water, water may be sterilized by mixing 8 drops (1/8 teaspoon) of unscented household chlorine bleach per gallon of water. Let the mixture sit for 30 minutes before use.
- Never use a microwave oven to warm infant formula. Microwave ovens do not heat the formula evenly and there may be hot spots that could burn the baby.