

Make an Informed Decision about Feeding Your Baby

All mothers and their families have the right to make a fully informed decision about how to feed and care for their babies. The Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit supports all women and families to feed their babies in a safe and nurturing way by providing reliable information based on facts, and opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns with a Public Health Nurse or Nutritionist by calling the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853.

There are a few things you need to know so that you can make an informed decision around infant feeding.

The World Health Organization recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, and continued breastfeeding with the addition of iron-rich solid foods for up to 2 years and beyond. You have the right to breastfeed your baby anywhere, any time.

Once breastfeeding is stopped and artificial feeding (using formula and a bottle) has been started, it can be difficult to start breastfeeding again.

Importance of Breastfeeding

For the mother:

- controls postpartum bleeding
- promotes bone health
- promotes resistance to breast, ovarian, and uterine cancers
- supports the natural health of mom's body

For the baby:

- supports a healthy digestive system
- promotes normal jaw and tooth development
- promotes healthy brain development
- provides resistance to illness and disease, including food allergies and digestive disease

For the family and community:

- convenient, always the right temperature and is available anytime
- free
- environmentally friendly
- reduces health care costs for the family and society
- assists with natural child spacing

Health Risks and Cost of Formula Feeding

For the mother:

- increased risk of type 2 diabetes and certain cancers (breast, ovaries, and uterus)
- brittle bones

For the baby:

- increased risk of various infections (ear, chest, gastrointestinal, diarrhea)
- digestive distress - inflammation of the digestive tract, Crohn's disease, colitis, diarrhea
- food allergies
- SIDS – sudden infant death syndrome
- tooth decay
- childhood illnesses and health problems

Average Price of Infant Formula for the First Year of Life

Formula costs collected in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Counties in May 2015

	Yearly	Monthly	Daily
Powdered**	\$931.37	\$77.61	\$2.55
Concentrated**	\$1,085.68	\$90.47	\$2.97
Ready-to-feed**	\$3,389.90	\$282.49	\$9.29

**Basic iron-fortified cow's milk formula

Powdered infant formula can have harmful bacteria that may make your baby sick. Follow directions on the formula package carefully.

The price of infant formula is based on how much formula the average healthy baby drinks during the first year of life. All babies are different. Some babies will drink more and others will drink less.

The prices above do not include bottles, nipples, and other feeding equipment. These things add to the total cost.

When there are problems with formula, recalls can be found on the Healthy Canadians website at healthycanadians.gc.ca

If you have made an informed choice to feed your baby formula, our **formula feeding resource** titled *Formula Feeding: What You Need to Know* will provide accurate and reliable information on feeding formula to your baby in a safe way. You can access this resource on our website or at any of our Health Unit offices.

If you would like more information about breastfeeding, please see the **(Community Supports - Breastfeeding)** referral map on our website, or call the Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853.

For more information or if you wish to discuss any questions or concerns with a Public Health Nurse or Nutritionist, contact the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit's Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 or visit the Babies and Children section of our website at www.healthunit.org/children.



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