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Beware of the risk of homemade infant formula

Proper nutrition during the first few years of life is critical for long-term health and well-being. By the end of November 2014, there were 1,182 babies born in the Tri-Counties. The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit recognizes a growing trend in the use and promotion of homemade infant formula.

Be advised that homemade infant formula is not recommended as these ingredient combinations, often claimed to be natural, are inconsistent and could contain harmful bacteria and an inappropriate balance of nutrients. This can lead to malnutrition as well as infection and serious illness in infants.

“Breastmilk contains the perfect combination of nutrients and is the safest and most natural food source for babies”, says Public Health Nutritionist, Emily Spencer. It is recommended that infants are breastfed exclusively for 6 months and up to two years and beyond with appropriate complimentary foods.

Commercial (store bought) infant formulas are the only recommended alternative if families have made an informed decision not to breastfeed. All commercial infant formulas are closely regulated by Health Canada to ensure that they are safe and that they meet nutritional standards to promote proper infant health and wellness. Every ingredient in commercial formula has a specific purpose and contributes to the proper growth of infants.

If you have questions or concerns about your infant’s specific feeding needs, contact the Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark District Health Unit’s Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 (613-345-5685). For more information about infant feeding visit our website at <http://www.healthunit.org/children/#Feeding>. Remember to like us on Facebook for important public health updates.

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