

Infant & Child Feeding During Emergencies

Breast/chest feeding is the safest way to feed your baby or younger child in an emergency or disaster. Continue to breast/chest feed to help your baby or younger child stay healthy.

Breast/Chest Feeding

- Breast/human milk is the safest and most nutritious choice for your baby or younger child.
- Breast/human milk protects against infections, diarrhea, and colds.
- Breast/human milk is the right temperature and helps prevent hypothermia.
- Breast/chest feeding can reduce stress for the parent and baby or younger child during an emergency.

Bottle/Cup Feeding

Bottle/cup feeding is a good way to feed your baby or younger child when they cannot feed directly at the breast/chest.

- Always wash your hands before cup feeding.
- Hand express breast milk into a cup for a baby to maximize volume.
- If using disposable cups, use a new cup for each feeding.
- If expressed/donor milk is unavailable, ready-to-feed infant formula is a safe option.

General

- If your baby is breast/chest feeding well, you do **NOT** need to give infant formula.
- Powdered formula is **NOT STERILE** and access to clean water may be limited. If necessary, use bottled water to prepare powdered formula until tap water is safe.
- Relactation is possible with continued milk expression.
- Sling/carrier/wrap will help keep baby close to breast/chest when feeding and provide comfort.
- Have an emergency-go-bag for your baby that has diapers, baby wipes, rash cream, blankets, clothes, infant food, disinfection wipes, bottles, feeding cups, non-perishable snacks that are age appropriate, manual breast pump, thermometer, medicine, copies of birth certificate/ medical records, and other supplies.



For More Information:

Call the National Women's Health and Breastfeeding Helpline:
(800) 994-9662

Email: info@breastfeedla.org

Visit online:

BreastfeedLA
breastfeedla.org

Center for Disease Control (CDC)
www.cdc.gov/infant-feeding-emergencies-toolkit

DPH Emergency Preparedness
<https://tinyurl.com/EPIF25>

(07/17/25)