As the formula shortage worsens, parents and caregivers find themselves in emergency situations where they cannot find baby formula. Shortages have caused parents and caregivers to search for other options to feed their babies. Unknowingly, some of the options may put their baby’s health at serious risk.

The NJ Poison Control Center warns families of the misinformation circulating online and on social media claiming it is safe to dilute (watered-down) formula or use homemade/Do-It-Yourself (DIY) recipes as alternatives. Neither of these options are safe alternatives, and both can result in serious harm to infants.
Even the best intentions can have devastating results.

Although it may seem safe to use substitutes or make homemade formula to feed your baby, it can be very dangerous and potentially life-threatening.
Shortages of baby formula may lead to the use of unsafe substitutes such as rice drinks, goat's milk, homemade formula, almond milk, cow's milk, diluted (watered-down) formula, honey, and protein shakes.

The use of any substitute to formula or breast milk can quickly lead to severe nutritional deficiency.

These additional nutrients are essential to their healthy growth and development.

It is important for parents and caregivers to make sure they do not feed their baby any products that do not contain the necessary daily nutrients.

Commercial/manufactured infant formula and human breast milk contain essential micronutrients and vitamins babies need to have at each feeding.
AAP has issued new guidance to help parents and caregivers struggling to find baby formula as the shortage worsens.

However, this new advice is **ONLY** for emergency situations where baby formula cannot be found.

These alternatives are only meant to be used for a short period of time; they cannot be used as permanent alternatives to baby formula.
Serious Health Effects Reported

Serious side effects have been reported after infants were given formula that does not meet the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) nutritional standards.

If you are not able to get your baby’s formula, it’s important to speak with your child’s pediatrician before making any changes.

Your pediatrician is a trusted source and can provide guidance as to the safest, available options, for your baby, especially if your baby has special health needs.

Do Not Make Or Feed Homemade Formula

Babies Have Become Sick

Diane Calello
A recent article in CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report discussed three separate incidences of infants treated in emergency departments for low calcium levels and vitamin D-deficient rickets after being fed homemade formula.

In addition, infants fed watered-down formula may develop electrolyte imbalance and brain swelling.
If a child is sick after drinking formula or any other product, contact your local poison control center immediately for medical treatment advice.

Get Free, Medical Help
1-800-222-1222

NJ Poison Control Center is a medical resource for both the public and healthcare providers.

Call the NJ Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222 or Chat Here
If someone is not breathing, hard to wake up, or having a seizure, call 9-1-1