



Breastfeeding Promotion and Support

STAFF HANDOUT

Breastfeeding is best for babies and moms, and WIC's new food packages are incentives to breastfeed. Many women currently on our program will deliver after the new food package is in place on June 1. We need to support these women *now* by helping them understand the benefits of exclusively breastfeeding! Our key messages are:

1. Babies were born to be breastfed!
2. The more breastmilk a baby gets, the healthier the baby and mom will be.
3. Babies fed only breastmilk are healthier than babies fed formula or a combination of formula and breastmilk.

Overview of the new food packages for mothers:

	Exclusively Breastfeeding	Partially Breastfeeding	Novel Breastfeeding
Milk (gallons)	5 gal + 1 qt	4 ½ gal + 1 qt	3 gal + 1 qt
Cheese (pounds)	2	1	1
Eggs (dozen)	2	1	1
Juice (12-oz cans)	3	3	2
Breakfast cereal (ounces)	36	36	36
Whole grains (pounds)	1	1	--
Dry beans and/or peanut butter	1 lb and 18 oz	1 lb and 18 oz	1 lb or 18 oz
Canned fish	30 oz	--	--
Fruit & vegetable voucher	\$10	\$8	\$8

1. Exclusively breastfeeding moms will receive breastfeeding support, nutrition education, and the most food for the entire 12 months postpartum.
2. Partially breastfeeding moms will receive breastfeeding support, nutrition education, and a little less food for the entire 12 months postpartum.
3. Moms who are novel breastfeeding have a food package similar to our current non-breastfeeding (N) package; these moms receive food until 6 months postpartum. *However*, to support their breastfeeding efforts, they will be participants (category B), and receive breastfeeding support and nutrition education for the entire 12 months postpartum.

Overview of the food benefits for the breastfeeding dyads:

Mom is...	Each month	Infant Age:			
		Birth – 1 month	1 – 3 months	4 – 5 months	6 – 12 months
Exclusively Breastfeeding (category B)	Mom gets	Exclusively BF Package	Exclusively BF Package	Exclusively BF Package	Exclusively BF Package
	Baby gets	Mom's Priceless Breastmilk!			Priceless Breastmilk! 2 boxes infant cereal 2 pounds bananas 60 jars baby food fruit & vegetables 31 jars baby food meats
Partially Breastfeeding (category B)	Mom gets	N/A	Partially BF Package	Partially BF Package	Partially BF Package
	Baby gets	N/A	Priceless Breastmilk! 1 to 4 cans formula	Priceless Breastmilk! 1 to 5 cans formula	Priceless Breastmilk! 1 to 4 cans formula 2 boxes infant cereal 2 pounds bananas 28 jars baby food fruit & vegetables
Novel Breastfeeding (category B)	Mom gets	Novel BF Package	Novel BF Package	Novel BF Package	No food package
	Baby gets	Priceless Breastmilk! 1 to 9 cans formula	Priceless Breastmilk! 5 to 9 cans formula	Priceless Breastmilk! 6 to 10 cans formula	Priceless Breastmilk! 5 to 7 cans formula 2 boxes infant cereal 2 pounds bananas 28 jars baby food fruit & vegetables

Details and Highlights

WIC's goal is to encourage every mother to initiate breastfeeding, and to encourage every mother to breastfeed exclusively. We also want to support any mother who chooses to breastfeed. Here are some details on how the new food rules support these messages:

What is WIC's definition of "breastfeeding?" Does breastfeeding once a day count?

USDA defines breastfeeding as, "the practice of feeding a mother's breastmilk to her infant(s) on the average of at least once per day." Therefore, breastfeeding once a day is considered breastfeeding.

How do the new food package rules differ from the current rules for the mom who is partially breastfeeding a 6 to 11 month old infant?

Currently, a mom who is partially breastfeeding a 6 to 11 month-old infant may receive a "pregnant and partially breastfeeding" food package for herself. She may also receive any amount of supplemental formula (1 can up to the full formula amount), and may remain on WIC until her infant turns 1 year or she reports that she is no longer breastfeeding.

The new rules also permit a mother to remain on the program for as long as she is breastfeeding. However, the main difference is – if she receives more than 3 cans of formula for her older infant, she will *not* receive a food package for herself. She will remain on the WIC program as a breastfeeding woman (category B), but the program benefits for her will include breastfeeding support, nutrition education, and she may receive a breast pump as appropriate.

What are the food rule changes that promote and support breastfeeding?

1. ***Exclusively breastfeeding food package***
This enhanced package provides extra nutrition, and is an incentive for mothers to breastfeed.
2. ***No formula during the first month***
Not giving formula to breastfed babies during the first month helps protect the breastfeeding mother's milk supply. The mother's growing milk supply develops in response to the amount of milk removed from the breast. Giving formula instead of breastmilk reduces the amount of milk the baby takes from the breast. If there is less demand for milk, the breasts will make less milk. So, the reason WIC will not provide formula to breastfed babies during the first month is to help moms be successful with breastfeeding.
3. ***Baby food meat***
Around 6 months of age, all babies need foods that supply iron and zinc. Meat is one of the best sources of these nutrients, so baby food meat is a built in incentive for exclusively breastfed infants.

Things to Prepare for...

Some breastfeeding moms will insist on having backup formula during the first month. We need to focus on helping these moms succeed with breastfeeding by:

- Educating prenatally
- Congratulating and praising mom for breastfeeding!
- Asking, "What is your plan for breastfeeding?"
- Asking, "Why do you want supplemental formula?"

For instance, the breastfeeding mother of an infant comes into the clinic during the baby's first month. She is already supplementing her baby with formula after each feeding. What is an appropriate course of action?

There are two possible scenarios.

1. For a non-medical reason, here is a suggested dialogue that might follow:

- "It is great that you are breastfeeding, it's what your baby needs to grow up healthy! I am interested in why you are also giving formula. Will you please tell me about that?"
- The mother may respond with the following: not enough breastmilk, "just in case," soreness when feeding, so someone else can feed, don't want to feed in public, too many appointments, too busy with other children, someone else encouraged mother to give formula, just to make sure baby gets what s/he needs, baby had formula in the hospital, etc.
- Address her issues, asking, "What makes you think you don't have enough milk?" Evaluate breastfeeding. Ask, "How long are you hoping to breastfeed your baby?"
- "WIC would like to help you be successful with breastfeeding." Discuss with her that giving only breastmilk in the first critical weeks is best for her baby and helps successfully establish her milk supply. Having formula around discourages breastfeeding and may reduce her confidence. Offer solutions based on the issue, e.g., feed more often, use a pump, refer to support group, or let mom come into the clinic to weigh baby as desired.

2. For a medical reason, here is a suggested dialogue that might follow:

- "It is great that you are breastfeeding, it's what your baby needs to grow up healthy! I am interested in why you are providing formula as well. Will you please tell me about that?"
- The mother may say that any of these illnesses were diagnosed in the hospital, and formula was started: low blood sugar, jaundice, prematurity, very low birth weight infant, etc.
- Ask, "How long did the doctor say the baby needs formula?" and "How long are you hoping to breastfeed your baby?"
- "WIC would like to help you be successful with breastfeeding. I'd like to have you talk to our clinic's lactation management specialist. " Offer solutions based on the issue, the baby may or may not need formula anymore. If there is a need for formula, the LMS can provide a pump if appropriate and a food package supportive of breastfeeding that meets the infant's nutritional needs (i.e., mostly formula-feeding food package). The mother will receive a food package with the least amount of foods.

What other situations can you think of?

Anticipated Participant Questions and How to Respond

WIC used to give formula to breastfed babies during the first month. Why don't you do this anymore?

WIC wants to protect breastfeeding. It takes 4 to 6 weeks for your breastmilk supply to be fully established. Introducing formula reduces your milk supply, which isn't good for your baby.

Can I have one can of formula for backup? Can I have formula for when I go to work/school?

Instead of using formula, consider pumping breastmilk as soon as you can and storing it in the freezer. Pumping helps establish a good milk supply, and someone else can feed this stored milk to your baby when you are away. WIC wants to protect breastfeeding, and giving formula in the first 4 to 6 weeks will reduce your milk supply. Would you like to discuss how to pump and store your milk?

What if I don't have enough breastmilk?

It is very rare for a mom to not make enough milk to feed her baby. Why are you concerned? [Refer to page 88 in the white section of the Breastfeeding Education Guide for common concerns and responses].

Doesn't feeding breastmilk and formula give my baby the best of both?

No, breastmilk is best for your baby. Your body makes milk that has the right balance of essential nutrients to help your baby grow. In order to successfully breastfeed, it is important to only provide breastmilk in the first 6 weeks. Introducing formula too early results in less breastmilk.

My mother/sister/friend said my baby is not gaining enough weight. Shouldn't I start giving formula?

If the baby's assessment is within normal limits, then: Your baby is growing very well, and your breastmilk is the best food for her right now. Keep breastfeeding your baby when she is hungry, and she will get the best nutrition and continue to grow.