

## ***Difficult Questions related to the WIC Food Package Changes***

When WIC starts giving out the new food packages, it is likely that participants will have many questions. Since there will be new foods and reduced amounts of other foods, these questions may be difficult or even negative. This *Difficult Questions* activity was designed to help you prepare for these questions in a way that is direct, effective, and positive.

- What?** Anticipate the common (and potentially difficult or negative) questions coming out of the upcoming food package changes.
- Why?** To develop consistent responses that support a participant-centered approach, and foster discussion rather than resistance.
- When?** Can be used at any point in a WIC clinic appointment, both prior to and during food package implementation.
- How?** Uses a *process* to frame responses, stay on message, and use as few words as possible.

### **Process:**

- 3 points
  - 9 seconds
  - 27 words
1. Reflect an emotion back to the participant.
  2. State a fact.
  3. Indicate what you can or are going to do for the participant.

**Example 1** [*do first as a group*]: The parent of a 9-month old infant asks, “Why am I getting less formula now than I used to get from WIC?”

*Possible response:*

1. “You sound concerned about not having enough formula.”
2. “Most babies need less formula as they eat more solids at this age.”
3. “Today you’ll receive baby foods, and cereal as well.”

## **Sample Questions, and some example responses**

### ***Infants:***

1. My baby doesn’t like (or doesn’t use) jarred baby foods – can I get more formula instead?  
**Possible Response:** *Sounds like starting solid foods has been challenging. Now your baby needs more solid foods and less formula. We can offer a variety of baby foods to try.*
2. Why do exclusively breastfeeding infants get more baby foods than the formula fed infants?
3. Is breastmilk less nutritious than formula, since the exclusively breastfed babies get infant meats as well as fruits and vegetables, and formula-fed babies only get fruits/vegetables?
4. Why does my 6-month old infant receive less formula than he used to receive?
5. Why does my 4-month old infant get more formula than he did at 3 months?
6. My baby doesn’t like [infant cereal, infant fruits, vegetables, or meats]. Do I have to buy it?
7. Why is there no juice for my baby on my checks?
8. Why can’t I get organic baby foods?

### ***Breastfeeding Woman:***

1. My doctor gave me a prescription for 2 cans of formula for my newborn. I'm still breastfeeding, so why can't I get this formula and still get my same foods?
2. I'm still breastfeeding – why do I get less food (or no food at all) if my baby gets more formula?
3. Why does my exclusively breastfed baby get all of this jarred infant food – does my breastmilk need to be supplemented?
4. Why are you giving me baby food meats for my breastfed baby? Does he need it?

### ***Children:***

1. Why do I need a prescription for: soy beverage? tofu? whole milk?  
**Possible Response:** *You sound like you are concerned about the extra work. It is important for your provider to know you're receiving soy instead of dairy. I can help you fill out the paperwork.*
2. Why do we now get less: eggs? cheese?  
**Possible Response:** *You sound worried you won't have enough food. Although eggs are high in protein, they are also high in saturated fat and cholesterol. WIC now provides low fat options instead, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.*
4. My child will not drink low fat milk – why can't I get whole milk for him?  
**Possible Response:** *Sounds like you are worried about food fights. Most people don't notice the taste difference if they don't know which milk they are getting. I can give you some ideas to make this change successfully.*
5. Is low fat milk as nutritious as whole/vitamin D milk?
6. What do I do with the voucher for fruits and veggies if my child won't eat them?
7. Why can't I get potatoes with my fruit and vegetable check?

### ***Pregnant and Postpartum Women:***

1. My family and I only drink vitamin D milk. Why do I have to get low fat milk?  
**Possible Response:** *It sounds like nutrition is important for your family. Low fat milk has as many nutrients as other milk. I can give you tips on transitioning to low fat milk.*
2. Why don't I qualify for the breastfeeding food package?
3. Why is WIC giving less formula?
4. Why do I need a prescription if I want more than 1 lb. of cheese?

### ***Providers & Partners:***

1. Why does WIC give my infant patients less formula than they used to?  
**Possible Response:** *Less formula may cause more patient concerns. To align with the American Academy of Pediatrics and National Institutes of Health, WIC decreased formula and added baby food. WIC is helping participants transition to current recommendations.*
2. Why are WIC clients that come to the Food Bank asking for more infant formula?
3. Why can't WIC families buy white potatoes with their WIC fruit and vegetable voucher?
4. Why is WIC still providing juice?
5. Why do participants only get a cash voucher for fruits and vegetables and not for other foods?