SAFE PREPARATION AND FEEDING OF FORMULA

Safe Preparation of Formula

• **Clean up before preparation**
  - Wash your hands with soap and water
  - Clean bottles in a dishwasher with hot water and a heated drying cycle, or scrub bottles in hot, soapy water and then sterilize them
  - Clean work surfaces, such as countertops and sinks

• **Prepare safely**
  - Keep powdered formula lids and scoops clean (be careful about what they touch).
  - Close containers of infant formula or bottled water as soon as possible.
  - Boil a sufficient volume of safe water. Bottled water is not sterile and must be boiled before use. Microwaves should never be used as uneven heating may result in 'hot spots' that can scald the infant's mouth.
  - Pour the appropriate amount of boiled water that has been allowed to cool to no less than 70 °C, into a cleaned and sterilized feeding cup or bottle. To achieve this temperature, the water should be left for no more than 30 minutes after boiling.
  - Carefully shake, rather than stir, formula in the bottle.
  - Cool formula to ensure it is not too hot before feeding your baby by running the prepared, capped bottle under cool water or placing it into an ice bath, taking care to keep the cooling water from getting into the bottle or on the nipple.
  - Before feeding the baby, test the temperature by shaking a few drops on your wrist.

• **Use up quickly or store safely**
  - Use formula within 2 hours of preparation. If the baby does not finish the entire bottle of formula, discard the unused formula.
  - If you do not plan to use the prepared formula right away, refrigerate it immediately and use it within 24 hours. Refrigeration slows bacterial growth and increases safety.
  - When in doubt, throw it out. If you can't remember how long you have kept formula in the refrigerator, it is safer to throw it out than to feed it to your baby.

• **Practice proper hygiene**
  - Wash your hands carefully with soap and water, especially after using the toilet or changing diapers. Always wash your hands:
    - before preparing and feeding bottles or foods to your infant
    - before touching your infant's mouth, and
    - before touching pacifiers or other things that go into your infant’s mouth.
  - It is also important to keep all objects that enter infants' mouths (such as pacifiers and teethers) clean.

**Powdered Infant Formula is Not Sterile**
Manufacturers report that, using current methods, it is not possible to eliminate all germs from powdered infant formula in the factory. Powdered infant formula can also be contaminated after the containers are opened. Very young infants, infants born prematurely, and infants with weakened immune systems are at the highest risk.
To best protect your infant, here are some things you can do:

- **Breastfeed.** Breastfeeding helps prevent many kinds of infections among infants. Almost no cases of *Cronobacter* infection have been reported among infants who were being exclusively breastfed (meaning, the baby was fed only breast milk and no formula or other foods).

- **If your baby gets formula, choose infant formula sold in liquid form, especially when your baby is a newborn or very young.** Liquid formulations of infant formula are made to be sterile and should not transmit *Cronobacter* infection.

- **If your baby gets powdered infant formula, follow these steps.** If your baby gets powdered infant formula, there are things you can do to protect your baby from infections – not just *Cronobacter* infections. Good hygiene, mixing the formula with water hot enough to kill germs, and safely storing formula can prevent growth of *Cronobacter* bacteria and other germs. These are keys to keeping your baby safe and healthy.

**Bottle Feeding Tips and Advice**

- **Always hold your baby close to you and look into his eyes when feeding.** This helps your baby feel safe and loved.

- **Try to hold your baby fairly upright,** with his head supported in a comfortable, neutral position.

- **Watch your baby’s cues.** All babies, whether breast or bottle fed should be fed whenever they show signs of being hungry, and not according to any kind of schedule. During feeding, if your baby starts to show any signs of distress (splayed fingers and toes, milk spilling out of mouth, turning head away, pushing bottle away), then your baby needs a break.

*Excerpted from:
http://www.cdc.gov/features/cronobacter/ and

**For More Information**

**Food Safety and Hand washing:**
- http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/

**Breastfeeding:**