



Infant Formula Shortage Resources

Here is a summary of the available resources and work being done to address the infant formula shortage.

The PA state emergency feeding task force has addressed the infant formula shortage and continues to monitor this. The state of PA has a WIC contract with Abbott, the company that has the closed facility that has especially impacted the availability of infant formula, in particular infant formula for special needs children. **PA is one of several state that have taken advantage of all three waivers offered by USDA so that WIC families can acquire infant formula they need:**

To help WIC participants get the formula they need, USDA is calling on all states to:

- Allow WIC participants to receive **alternate container sizes** - including those that are bigger than usual - and **different forms**, like ready to feed.
- Allow WIC participants to receive **different brands** of formula without a doctor's note.
- Allows **WIC stores to exchange recalled formula** purchased with WIC benefits.

Waivers:

- **Maximum Monthly Allowance:** Allows participants to receive alternate container sizes -- including those that are bigger than usual -- and different forms, like ready to feed.
- **Medical Documentation:** Allows participants to receive a different brand of formula without a doctor's note.
- **Vendor Exchanges:** Allows stores to exchange recalled formula purchased with WIC benefits.

Meanwhile, Abbot has:

- air shipped millions of cans of infant formula powder into the U.S. from our FDA-registered facility in Cootehill, Ireland.
- prioritized infant formula production at their Columbus, Ohio, facility, converting other liquid manufacturing lines into manufacturing Similac liquid ready-to-feed.
- Is offering an increased number and value of coupons available for all their infant formula products, including Similac ready-to-feed, to enable customers to purchase formula, either free or deeply discounted.
- Has all their other manufacturing facilities are running at full capacity as we continue to prioritize production of infant formula to help replenish the supply in the market.




- Expects to open their closed Sturgis, MI facility within two weeks and is doing limited case by case production for special needs formula. That should improve the retail supply in about 6-8 weeks, along with expedited importation.

Many consumers start to panic when they have only 1 month supply left. The most important point is to discourage panic-buying and consumer hoarding. **Parents should keep no more than a 10 day/2-week supply on hand and using that guideline, retailers are limiting purchases.** Pediatricians and nutrition groups are working to educate consumers that it is not necessary to buy brand names and that store brands such as those found at Walgreen's, Walmart, and Target are perfectly adequate. Reputable on-line retailers are another source (I heard there is an abundance of formula in Texas, but not sure if that is correct). **The USDA is encouraging consumers with children over 4 months of age to talk with their pediatricians about introducing complementary foods.**

The American Academy of Pediatrics offers these [tips](#) if one can't find formula. The Lehigh Valley does have a [milk bank](#) available to mostly special needs infants (those most seriously affected by the shortage), and I believe you need a pediatric referral to them. I don't know the status of their supply.

For manufacturer resources:

Manufacturer Hotlines

- Gerber's [MyGerber Baby Expert](#) : reach a certified nutrition or lactation consultant by phone, text, Facebook Messenger, web chat, or video call, who can help you identify a similar formula that may be more readily available
- Abbott's Consumer Hotline: call 1-800-986-8540
- Abbott's urgent [product request line](#) : ask your OBGYN or your infant's pediatrician to submit an urgent product request by [downloading and completing the form - PDF](#) 
- Reckitt's Customer Service line: call 1-800 BABY-123 (222-9123)

Tips for Finding Similac shared by PA Head Start

Permission from the Similac representative to share this info as widely as we'd like.

We wanted to pass on some information we learned from a Similac representative to help with the shortage (this only applies to Similac)

1. Amazon receives daily shipments of infant formula, check the website often for availability. Subscriptions can be set up for formula.
2. Walmart receives daily shipments of formula in store and online. Shopping early may be helpful to find specific formulas at these locations. Check the website often for availability.

3. Target receives daily shipments of formula in store and online. The stores typically stock their shelves overnight. Shopping when the stores open is key. Check the website often for availability.
4. Grocery stores receive formula shipments a few times a week. Parents should ask at their local grocery stores what day they receive shipments and shop early on those days.
5. Wholesale stores like Sam's sell formula in bulk sizes and have had some formula in stock
6. The Instacart app can be helpful to find formula and even set up a local delivery if needed

Locally, there is a volunteer group called Moms Offering Moms Support. Their website is eastonmoms.org. They are also taking donations of formula (and diapers), so I don't know if they have any available. They can be reached by email: Easton.pa.moms@gmail.com or phone (860) 572-6001.

On Facebook, [Lehigh Valley Food](#) has a pin on the top of their page (you have to join – it is a public group) for Baby Formula. Members who are shopping or working in retail post pictures of where and when formula is available. Members can post what they are looking for. In some cases, others have offered to purchase and deliver for others.