

Parents' guide to feeding your premature baby with post-discharge formula

This leaflet is for the parents and carers of babies born weighing less than 2kg and gives advice on feeding / supplements once your baby goes home.

Feeding your baby after leaving hospital

A lot of attention has been given to feeding your baby since birth. Expressed breast milk may have been fortified to ensure the increased nutritional needs of your baby were met.

When breast milk is not available, a nutrient-enriched, low birth weight formula will have been used. On Buscot Ward this is called Nutriprem 1.

Your baby will have been weighed regularly to ensure they were growing adequately and getting the right amount and type of milk.

Now it is time for your baby to go home, we want to help you make sure that your baby continues to grow well.

Breastfeeding

We encourage mothers to continue to breastfeed and any problems you encounter there is the hospital breastfeeding clinic, the breastfeeding network that have a list of support groups in your area and of course your health visitor can give you advice. You will need to continue giving the iron and vitamin supplements as follows:

- 1 ml Sytron (iron supplement) per day; and
- Multivitamins Dalavit 0.3ml (or 0.6ml Abidec) once per day.

These are prescribed by your GP. Abidec should continue until two years after your baby was born and Sytron until they are fully weaned. If you decide to stop breastfeeding altogether before your baby is six months old, he or she may benefit from having Nutriprem 2.

Formula-feeding

If you decide to give a mixture of breast and standard term infant formula, your baby will still need the multivitamins until 2 years of age and 1 ml of Sytron per day until they are fully weaned.

If you are bottle-feeding your baby we recommend you use Nutriprem 2. This will have been started a few days before your baby goes home or at a weight of 2kg.

While on Nutriprem 2, your baby will not need any iron supplement but will need to continue the multivitamins until the age of 2.

What is Nutriprem 2?

Nutriprem 2 is a baby formula designed to meet the nutritional needs of premature and low birth weight babies when they are ready to go home. It is usually given to babies less than 34 weeks

gestation and who weighed less than 2kg at birth.

Why is Nutriprem 2 better than standard baby milk formula?

Research had shown that a nutrient-enriched formula, such as Nutriprem 2, leads to a better increase in weight, length, head growth and stronger bones.

A ready-to-feed version will be used in hospital, but for home you will learn how to make up the Nutriprem 2 from powder.

Where do I get Nutriprem 2 from?

You will be given a few tins by Buscot Ward before you leave. Further supplies are available on prescription from your GP. Your GP will prescribe the Nutriprem 2 until your baby is six months corrected age.

How much do I give?

Nutriprem 2 is made by adding one level scoop of powder to one fluid ounce (30 ml) of cooled, boiled water. It is best to feed your baby on demand. It may be advisable to make up more Nutriprem 2 than your baby has been taking so there is extra if needed.

When you first go home, give the same amount of milk that your baby was having in hospital. As your baby grows you will need to make up and give more milk. Your health visitor can advise you, if needed.

How long should I use Nutriprem 2?

Your GP will continue to prescribe Nutriprem 2 until six months after the date your baby was due (six months corrected age). After this time, you can change to a standard formula or a follow-on formula (suitable from six months of age), both of which are available in supermarkets and chemists.

Weaning

Once your baby is home and growing well, your next question is likely to be '*When can I start solids?*' There is no simple answer.

Recent recommendations for premature infants state that weaning should start between 5 – 7 months of age. This is their actual age from birth and not their corrected age.

As well as your baby being between 5 – 7 months old this should always been taken with other signs that your baby is ready for weaning, such as:

- Is your baby showing interest in other people eating?
- Is your baby putting things into his or her mouth and drooling?
- Does your baby seem ready for something new?
- Does your baby seem less satisfied with milk alone?
- Can your baby be easily supported in a sitting position?

- Can your baby hold their head in a stable position?

Reasons to start weaning

Many babies start to make early 'chewing movements' from around four months of age. They also use their tongue and lips to explore toys and food. It is important for the development of the mouth and jaw muscles that your baby start solids around the time that these chewing movements start.

At around 5 – 7 months, your baby is usually willing to take new flavours.

If a baby gets used to a spoon and semi-solid foods by seven months, it will be easier to introduce solid foods that need chewing later.

More information on weaning is available from the Bliss website at www.bliss.org.uk

When can I use cow's milk?

Cow's milk is not recommended as a milk drink for infants under one year of age. For premature infants, cow's milk can be used once your baby is one year corrected age but it may be better to continue a follow-on formula if he or she is not eating a good variety of solids.

However, it is important to introduce drinks from a cup and aim to have your baby off bottles by 12 – 18 months of age.

Contacts for further advice

If your baby has been discharged from hospital on a special milk or was born at 32 weeks or less, he or she may be followed-up by the paediatrician.

For further support and advice, speak to your health visitor or discuss with the paediatrician at your clinic appointments. Buscot Ward Tel: 0118 322 7430

Breastfeeding support

- Breastfeeding clinic – 0118 322 7295 Tuesday and Thursday mornings 11am-1pm and Wednesday (Wokingham) 2pm-4pm, please telephone for an appointment. Held in the Parentcraft Room, Level 2, Maternity Unit.
- www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk – offers support, advice and a list of breastfeeding drop in groups in your area
- [Bliss](#) – A national charity dedicated to supporting premature and sick babies and their families. For more information visit their website www.bliss.org.uk

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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