

LEAPS

learning eating active play sleep

Toddler Formula



When children are not breastfed or are partially breastfed, commercial infant formulas based on cow's milk should be used as an alternative to breast milk until 12 months of age¹. After the age of 12 months, Full Cream cow's milk can be introduced to toddlers as a drink.

What are toddler formulas?

Infant formula companies produce '**toddler**' or '**Step 3**' formulas, which are promoted as providing essential nutrients to help with the growth and development of toddlers over the age of 12 months 'when energy and nutrient intakes may not be adequate'. They promote added vitamins and minerals and other ingredients in the formula.

As from the age of 12 months it is appropriate to give Full Cream Cow's milk, preferably via a cup, not a feeding bottle, combined with a range of nutritious foods. Toddler formulas are also expensive to buy.



Healthy toddlers, who are eating a wide variety of nutritious foods from the five food groups in the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating, will obtain all essential nutrients from their food and drinks.

When could toddler formulas be used?

Some children may benefit from having toddler formula e.g. those with very low food intake. It is best to seek medical advice from a medical practitioner (e.g. GP), child health nurse or dietitian should be seen for information and support in these circumstances.

If families or carers wish to give toddler formula to their children, they must make sure that it doesn't replace meals or foods and they need to limit the amount children drink.

What drinks are recommended for toddlers?

- Water & pasteurised full fat milk are the best & preferred drinks for toddlers (1-2 years of age).
- Reduced fat milk or low fat milk can be introduced after children turn two years of age. Skimmed milk can be given after the age of five years.
- All drinks should be offered in a cup rather than a feeding bottle.
- Sugar-sweetened drinks and fruit juice should be limited and tea, coffee and other caffeinated drinks are unsuitable for toddlers.
- After two years of age, limit cow's milk to around 500mls per day to ensure appetite for other foods is not affected.

For further advice, speak with a child health nurse, paediatrician or dietitian.



¹ Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013