



**UPDATED: 08/2011**

## **TROPICAL STORM/HURRICANE INFORMATION SHEET**

### **FEEDING INFANTS DURING EMERGENCIES & DISASTERS**

In the event of a hurricane, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) encourages new mothers to adhere to these guidelines for feeding their infant(s):

#### **Breastfeeding**

- Breastfeeding is the safest way to feed babies. Mothers who are breastfeeding should continue to breastfeed their babies.
- Pregnant women should be advised to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months of their babies lives and continue through at least one year.
- Mothers who are both breastfeeding and formula feeding their infants should increase breastfeeding as much as possible in place of bottle feeding.
- For some mothers and babies, once breastfeeding has stopped, it may be started again successfully.
- During a disaster formula should only be used when mothers are unable to breastfeed.

#### **Feeding with Infant Formula**

- Infant formula should be prepared according to the directions on the formula label and as instructed by the baby's health care provider.
- All baby bottles and nipples must be washed and sterilized before each use. If this is not possible, then single-serve, ready-to-feed bottles of formula must be used with a sterilized nipple.
- If unable to boil water, water may be sterilized by mixing 8 drops (1/8 teaspoon) of unscented household chlorine bleach per gallon of water. **Let the mixture sit for 30 minutes before use.**
- **Ready-to-feed formula** does not need mixing and water should not be added. Just remember that once a can of ready-to-feed formula is opened it must be refrigerated and should be used within 24 hours or as specified on the infant formula label.
- **Always boil water before mixing concentrated liquid or powdered formula.** Boiling water is the best way to make water safe to drink. Cold tap water or bottled water (except sterilized bottled water) must be boiled vigorously for 1 minute, allowed to cool, and then mixed with powdered or concentrated liquid formula following directions on the formula label. Once formula is mixed, it must be refrigerated and used within 24 hours or as specified on the formula label. If refrigeration is not available, mix formula each time baby is ready to eat and then discard extra formula.

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- Sterilized bottled water does not need to be boiled before mixing with concentrated liquid or powdered formula.
- Never use a microwave oven to warm infant formula. Microwave ovens do not heat the formula evenly and there may be hot spots that could burn the baby.

For more information, visit the Florida Department of Health website at <http://floridawic.org/pages/disaster/disaster.htm>

For further information, please contact your local county health department or visit [www.doh.state.fl.us](http://www.doh.state.fl.us) or [www.FloridaDisaster.org](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org).