



Safe Food for Babies and Children: Warming Bottles Safely

For the first year of a baby's life, breast milk or infant formula should be used to provide the nutrition necessary to promote growth and general health. Premixed infant formula and expressed breast milk do not need to be heated prior to feeding. However, many babies prefer warm bottles because of the similarity to warm milk fed from the breast.

Preparing infant bottles requires the parent or caregiver to be knowledgeable about safe heating and handling practices. Bottles can be heated safely and easily by stovetop heating or running the bottle under hot water.



Stovetop Heating

In this simple and convenient method, bottles are:

- placed in a pan of water warming on the stovetop *or*
- placed in the pan after the water has been heated and removed from the stove.

In either case, the water does **not** need to be heated to the boiling point, and the bottle needs to be in the water for only a few minutes. Stovetop heating is recommended for warming expressed breast milk. To prevent burns to the baby, test the temperature of the formula or breast milk by sprinkling a few drops on the inside of your wrist.

Hot Running Water

An easy way to safely heat bottles with disposable liners is to use hot, running water from your faucet. Holding the bottle under the faucet for about two minutes will allow the breast milk or formula to reach a desirable temperature. Remember to test the temperature by sprinkling a few drops of milk or formula on the inside of your wrist before serving.

Microwave Heating Is Not Recommended for Bottles

Microwaving formula in bottles can result in uneven heating and hot spots. Hot spots can cause serious burns to a baby's mouth and throat.

Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D.
Food and Nutrition Specialist

For more information on nutrition and food safety,
visit the NDSU Extension website: www.ag.ndsu.edu/food

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to Vice Provost for Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 201, NDSU Main Campus, 701-231-7708, nds.u.eoaa@ndsu.edu. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, 701-231-7881.

NDSU

EXTENSION

North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota