

## **Infants who are not breastfeeding are at increased risk when there is flooding**

**Any mother considering feeding her baby artificially needs a clear specific discussion on risks posed by flood conditions:**

1. Do you have access to drinking water to make up feeds and water to wash equipment?  
If you will need to buy drinking water can you get to the shops (are roads clear) and get it home (heavy), do the shops have good stocks of water, and is water cost a concern? About 12 litres is needed per day, 84 litres for one week.
2. Is your power (electricity, gas, solid fuel) at risk from floods?  
Power is needed to prepare feeds and to wash equipment and to store feeds if not made up one by one.
3. Is there access to powdered formula? Or access to ready to feed formula?  
Access to shops and do shops have stocks - are delivery trucks getting through to flooded areas?  
If there is no home refrigeration working then ready to feed formula (if used) will need to be in single feed size with the unused discarded 2 hours after opening - 6-8 single feeds per day, approximately 56 feeds for 1 week. Single feed formula is costly; discuss this cost.

**If safe feeding conditions cannot be assured the infant should not be discharged from the maternity unit until safe conditions are in place.**

Donations of a few bottles of ready to feed are not a safe solution to the problem. Review with the mother if she would consider breastfeeding for a week or two until her situation is safer. Provide assistance to establish breastfeeding.

More information on infant feeding in emergencies:

- o BFHI Link Issue 38 Dec 2009 <http://www.babyfriendly.ie/newsletter.htm>
- o Gribble & Berry. Emergency preparedness for those who care for infants in developed country contexts. International Breastfeeding Journal 2011  
<http://www.internationalbreastfeedingjournal.com/content/6/1/16> (free to download)

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