

### Higher risk of lung infections

Children who are formula-fed are 16.7 times more likely to have pneumonia than children who were given only breast milk as infants.

### Higher risk of ear infections

Studies show that infants who are formula-fed are 50% more likely to have ear infections than babies who receive only breast milk.

### Higher risk of infection from contaminated formula

Babies have become very sick, and some have died, because of harmful germs in formula. Some formulas cannot be sterilized.

### Higher risk of chronic diseases

Formula feeding is linked to higher risk for Type 1 diabetes and bowel diseases such as celiac disease and inflammatory bowel disease.

### Risk of lower intelligence

Studies show that children who are breastfed do better on intelligence tests than children who were formula-fed.

### Higher risk of effects of environmental poisons

Breastfeeding lowers the harmful effects on a child's health from poisons in the environment like PCBs and dioxins.

## The World Health Organization recommends

- Exclusive breastfeeding (only breast milk) for the first six months.
- Gradually introducing other nutritious foods at six months along with continued breastfeeding for two years and beyond.



**Garnet Health.**

#### Harris

68 Harris Bushville Road  
Harris, NY 12742  
(845) 794-3300, Ext. 2372

#### Middletown

707 East Main Street  
Middletown, New York 10940  
(845) 333-1000

[garnethealth.org/maternity](http://garnethealth.org/maternity)

Adapted from INFACT Canada's Fourteen Risks of Formula Feeding: A Brief Annotated Bibliography by the Breastfeeding Action Group in Corner Brook, Newfoundland.

# 14 Risks of Formula Feeding



**Garnet Health.**

When mothers do not breastfeed, they generally use infant formulas. It is recommended by the World Health Organization that parents are told about the health risks of using formula. This brochure has information from medical research that shows the risks of formula feeding to help you make a more informed decision about feeding your baby.



### **Higher risk of allergy**

Formula feeding is linked to higher incidence of eczema, allergies to food, inherited allergies and allergies that affect breathing such as hay fever.

### **Higher risk of asthma**

Medical studies show that babies who are formula-fed are 40% to 50% more likely to have asthma or wheezing.

### **Higher risk of heart disease**

A study shows that breastfeeding may help reduce the risk of heart disease by keeping cholesterol levels low later in life. It also shows that 13 to 16 year olds who were formula-fed have higher blood pressures than children who had received breast milk.

### **Higher risk of death from diseases**

Babies who are formula-fed have a higher risk of death due to illnesses such as diarrhea and lung infections.

### **Higher risk of obesity**

Research is showing that children who are formula-fed are nearly 40% more likely to be obese than children who are breastfed - even after looking at other things that may explain why a person may be overweight.

### **Higher risk of childhood cancers**

Research shows that children who have not been breastfed are more likely to get leukemia and other cancers than children who were given only breast milk.

### **Higher risk of diarrhea**

Studies show that babies who are formula-fed are twice as likely to have diarrhea than breastfed babies.

### **Higher risk of diabetes**

Research shows that formula feeding increases the risk of getting diabetes later in life.

# If you have questions

**about breastfeeding, please ask your physician or nurse.**