

COR-2022-177228

MEMORANDUM

TO: Healthcare Providers

FROM: Public Health Division, Department of Health and Community Services

DATE: June 17, 2022

SUBJECT: Shortage of hypoallergenic infant formula

Canada is currently experiencing a shortage of hypoallergenic infant formula. This is the result of the closure of a manufacturing facility operated by Abbott Laboratories in Michigan. This has particularly affected specialized infant formulas used for infants with metabolic disorders, severe gastrointestinal diseases and food allergies. Inventory of extensively hydrolyzed and amino acid-based formulas remain very low across the country. This situation is likely to continue for several weeks despite the recent resumption of production at the Abbott plant in Michigan.

The Department of Health and Community Services, along with partners in the Regional Health Authorities, have continued to work with Health Canada, Provincial and Territorial Governments and infant formula companies to develop plans for equitable distribution of the formulas that are in short supply, as well as communication materials for healthcare providers and for the public.

Health Canada has published information to help guide families during the shortage of hypoallergenic infant formula at canada.ca/infant-formula-shortage. This includes a downloadable **fact sheet** with a description of infant formulas affected by the shortage and useful information on possible alternative approaches and products. This fact sheet can be used by families, in consultation with their healthcare provider, to determine if their baby needs to be on a formula impacted by the shortage or whether they can safely use an alternate formula that is more available.

In addition, Health Canada has worked with stakeholders to develop a national **decision tree** to support healthcare providers in their discussions with families. This decision tree can guide treatment decisions, and help to ensure specialized infant formulas are available for babies who need it. The fact sheet for families and the decision tree for healthcare providers are attached to this memo.

For families needing to use the specialized formulas in short supply, amino acid-based and extensively hydrolyzed infant formulas will be available from a pharmacy. Pharmacists will order the formulas through their typical distribution channels and control inventory, reserving these formulas for babies who need them most.

Please note that there have been infant formula products imported to Canada to help mitigate the effects of the shortage. To date, this includes Alimentum Ready-to-Use, Nutramigen Liquid Concentrate and Gerber Extensive Hydrolyzed HA Powder.

Thank you for your partnership in supporting families in Newfoundland and Labrador.