

Using breast milk fortifier (BMF) at home

Information for parents

This information sheet answers some of the questions you may have about using breast milk fortifier (BMF) at home. It explains why we have recommended it for your baby and how they will be followed up. If you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the doctors or nurses caring for your child.

What is breast milk fortifier (BMF)?

Breast milk alone does not meet all the nutritional needs of pre-term infants. Breast milk fortifier is a powder that is added to expressed breast milk (EBM) to increase the calories, protein, vitamins and minerals in the milk to help to support your pre-term baby's growth and weight gain. Your baby will have been started on BMF in hospital before discharge home.

Why does my infant need to stay on BMF at home?

BMF will help your baby's growth and weight gain once they leave the hospital and during the transition to either full breastfeeding, breast milk from a bottle or a combination of both. BMF is usually only used for 2 to 3 weeks after discharge.

What are the benefits of BMF?

BMF helps to support weight gain and growth without the need for infant formula top ups. It can also help to support continued use of breast milk and breast feeding on discharge home.

What are the risks of BMF?

BMF is made from hydrolysed (broken down) cows' milk protein and is generally well tolerated. Your baby will be started on the fortifier before discharge home so we will already know if there are any problems.

Are there any alternatives?

There are no alternatives to breast milk fortification other than using formula milk to increase the calories and protein that your baby receives. If you have concerns about the consumption of animal products, please discuss with your baby's medical team.

Consent

Parental consent will have been obtained before adding BMF to maternal expressed breast milk on the unit.

How to give BMF at home

The dietitian will advise you on how many sachets per day to give.

How to make the fortified breast milk supplement

Measure ____ml of EBM (fresh EBM if available) in a sterile bottle and add ____ sachets of BMF to this. Once added swirl gently to mix, do not shake.

Label the bottle with the date and time you made it and store the fortified breast milk in the fridge for a maximum of 24 hours.

How to use the fortified breast milk supplement

Offer ____ml of fortified breast milk via a bottle or teat before each breast feed or bottle of EBM or tube feed of EBM

Offer this at ____ feeds per 24 hrs, that is every ____ hours

If you feel that your baby is not breastfeeding well, please stop using the breast milk fortifier and contact the dietitian.

How is the fortifier weaned down and stopped?

The dietitian will assess your baby's growth in clinic and, if appropriate, make a plan with you to reduce the BMF with a view to stopping it.

Further advice:

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Breast milk fortifier supplies will be provided to you by the neonatal unit on discharge initially. If your baby requires this for longer the GP will be asked to prescribe it.

Who to contact?

If you have any queries or concerns about your baby's feeding after they have been discharged, please contact the neonatal dietitians, Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm:

- for discharges from King's College Hospital: 020 3299 4434
- for discharges from Princess Royal University Hospital 01689 865743

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams.

Tel: **020 3299 4618**

Email: **kings.pals@nhs.net**

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Interpreting and Accessible Communication Support on 020 3299 4618 or email kings.access@nhs.net