

Feeding the Pre-term Infant – Management in primary care

- For Infants who are born prematurely or below 2.5 Kg there are additional nutritional considerations which should be taken to ensure optimum growth and development.
- These children will likely already be under regular review by the paediatricians. Check correspondence for more details.
- Breast feeding is the ideal nutritional choice for infants including pre-term infants.

Nutrient enriched post discharge formulas (NEPDF)

For infants using mixed or formula feeding, born <34 weeks or <2Kg, a specialist enriched formula may be required to meet the unique nutritional requirements of preterm or low birth weight infants.

If nutrient enriched post discharge formula is required, this will be started in secondary care.

Table 1: cost and quantity comparison of available products.

Formula	Presentation	Cost	£ per 100kcal	Quantity required each month
Nutiprem 2 (powder)	800 grams	£10.64	£0.26 per 100kcal	5 x 800 grams tin
SMA Gold prem 2 (powder)	400 grams	£5.06	£0.25 per 100kcal	10 x 400 grams tin
SMA Gold prem 2 (liquid)	200ml	£1.68	£1.15 per 100kcal	140 x 200ml
Nutiprem 2 (liquid)	200ml	£1.78	£1.19 per 100kcal	140 x 200ml

General guidance for prescription volume based on 150mls/kg/d; individual needs may vary dependent on nutritional status (follow specialist advice).

Nutiprem 2 Powder is the first line choice in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System.

However, if a child has been started on and is tolerating the alternative SMA formula this should not be changed.

Liquid ready to feed formula should not be routinely prescribed unless there is a clinical need, e.g., in nasogastric feeding or if the infant is considered immunocompromised.

Nutrient enriched post discharge formula monitoring

Pre-term infants are vulnerable to over and under feeding. Therefore, their growth should be regularly monitored by a health care professional (e.g., Health visitor), especially whilst using nutrient enriched post discharge formulas.

- Weight + (Centile)
- Length + (Centile)
- Head Circumference + (Centile)

Regular length monitoring is important as centile may increase during catch up growth.

Refer to dietitians if there are concerns around poor growth or [faltering growth](#):

- A fall across 1 or more weight centile spaces if birthweight was below the 9th centile.
- A fall across 2 or more weight centile spaces if birthweight was between the 9th and 91st centiles.
- When current weight is below the 2nd centile for age, whatever the birthweight.

Not all babies need these formulae until 6 months corrected age:

- Nutrient enriched post discharge formula should be discontinued by 6 months corrected age (unless advised by the specialist team).
- If there is excessive weight gain (e.g., weight centile over 2 centiles above length centile) at any stage up to 6 months corrected age, stop the formula and change to standard OTC term infant formula.
- If growth / weight gain is poor at 6 months corrected; refer to paediatric dietitians – **do not** stop formula, dietitian will advise more suitable formula at assessment.

If discontinuing a nutrient enriched post discharge formula; ensure that the infant's vitamin and mineral supplementation has been changed appropriately.

[Vitamins and mineral supplementation](#)

An appropriate regime of vitamin or iron will be started in secondary care.

The local Neonatal Operational Delivery Network guidelines recommend vitamin or iron supplementation for infants born ≤ 34 weeks and considered for iron supplementation if born < 2.5 kg especially if exclusively breastfed.

[Daily supplementation Regime](#)

[Breast milk](#)

- Vitamins (Abidec or Healthy Start Vitamins): 0.6ml, until 1 year corrected.
- Folic acid: 50 micrograms, until due date.
- Iron feredetate liquid (SodiFer or Sytron): 1.0ml, until 1 year corrected.

[Nutriprem 2](#)

- Vitamins (Abidec or Healthy Start Vitamins): 0.6ml, until 1 year corrected.
- Folic acid: not required.
- Iron feredetate liquid (SodiFer or Sytron): not required.

[SMA gold Prem 2](#)

- Vitamins (Abidec or Healthy Start Vitamins): 0.6ml, until 6 months corrected.
- Folic acid: not required.
- Iron feredetate liquid (SodiFer or Sytron): 1.0ml, until 6 months corrected.

[Standard term or specialist formulas e.g., cow's milk allergy](#)

- Vitamins (Abidec or Healthy Start Vitamins): 0.6ml, until 6 months corrected.
- Folic acid: not required.
- Iron feredetate liquid (SodiFer or Sytron): 1.0ml, until 6 months corrected.

Dalivit should not be used as an interchangeable alternative for Abidec due to its high vitamin A content.

Healthy Start Vitamins should not be taken in addition to Abidec due to the vitamin A content, however for formula fed infants Healthy Start Vitamins are a suitable alternative to Abidec.

Breast feeding mothers should be encouraged to supplement their diet with vitamin D as per Department of Health guidelines.

Self-Care

It is Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System policy to encourage self-care for patients where the recommended treatment is available over the counter.

[Abidec can be purchased from a community pharmacist](#). However, if a prescriber has concerns that a patient might not be able to or is unwilling to self-care and treatment for the neonate population a prescription should be issued.

[Healthy start vitamins](#) are available for purchase in pharmacies.

Or

Free using the scheme for Parents or Guardians of children under 4 years old where the family gets:

- Child tax credit (income less than £16,190).
- Income support.
- Income-related employment + support allowance
- Income-Based jobseeker allowance.
- Universal credit (with no/less than £408 earned per month).
- Pension credit.
- **Or** where mothers are under 18.

Document ratification details

Ratification Process	Details
Authored by:	Lead primary care dietitian (CPCCG); Principal Paediatric dietitian (CUH); Paediatric dietitian (NWAFT)
Ratified by:	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Prescribing Group
Date ratified:	November 2020
Review date:	November 2022
Version number:	1