

WIC Working with Health Care Providers: Required Medical Documentation and New Formula Policies

Up-to-date Information on the Connecticut WIC Program for the Health Care Professional

Breastfeeding in WIC

The WIC Program promotes breastfeeding as the normal and optimal method to feed infants for at least the first year of life with a special emphasis on the health benefits derived from exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months. If infants do consume formula, the Program supports the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) recommendation that all formula-fed infants receive iron-fortified formula for the first year. More specifics on the Connecticut WIC Program's breastfeeding promotion and support efforts will be detailed in June's WIC Fact Sheet.

What is a WIC Contract Formula?

At present, the Connecticut WIC Program has a sole source contract with **Nestle®** to provide standard iron-fortified milk- and soy- based infant formulas for healthy infants from birth to twelve months of age whose mothers choose not to or partially breastfeed or for whom breastfeeding is medically contraindicated.

As of July 1, 2009, the Connecticut WIC Program will no longer provide non-contract standard (milk- and soy-based) infant formula under any circumstances.

The Program will continue to provide special/exempt formulas, such as protein hydrolysate, hypercaloric, elemental and metabolic infant formulas with an appropriate nutrition related ICD-9 code medical diagnosis. General symptoms such as fussiness, colic, spitting-up and constipation **will no longer** be acceptable justification for formula change requests. See the reverse side of this Fact Sheet for more details on the revised WIC Medical Documentation policies.

Although small differences in protein, fat and carbohydrate exist among all standard formulas, there are no medically proven advantages of any particular brand name formula over another. While parents/guardians or health care providers may have a personal preference for a particular brand of formula, funding constraints and WIC Regulations limit the issuance of non-contract, special/exempt formulas only to participants with qualifying or serious medical conditions.



Basis for the Revised WIC Formula Policy:

Federal Mandate and Rising Program Costs

States are federally mandated to obtain a competitive bid on infant formula to comply with Program cost containment measures. As you know many hospitals and health maintenance organizations also enter into sole source contracts to provide a standard formulary of products for their institutions to effectively manage resources. Connecticut holds part of a multi-state contract with five other New England WIC Programs for Nestle® infant formula which saves the taxpayers money. Non-contract standard formulas are purchased by the WIC Program at the **retail price**. Connecticut WIC receives approximately an 70% rebate on Nestle® formulas purchased. Therefore, infants receiving a non-contract standard infant formula cost the Program **three times** as much as infants on the WIC contract formula. With overall food costs on the rise and the transition to the new WIC Food Packages, we have taken the above steps to reallocate our limited resources. We hope to have your support in implementing this policy change.

What formulas are NO longer available from the Connecticut WIC Program?

All standard milk- and soy-based infant formulas manufactured by:

Abbott Laboratories (Ross Products Division)

- Similac Advance with Iron
- Isomil Advance Soy
- Similac Sensitive

Mead Johnson

- Enfamil LIPIL
- ProSobee LIPIL
- Gentlease LIPIL

PBM Nutritionals

Manufactures most generic or store brand standard infant formulas

Currently, the Connecticut WIC Program is NOT routinely approving formula or medical foods containing pre- or probiotics.

WIC Medical Documentation Requirements

Revised WIC Regulations require more communication between WIC and health care providers and increased medical documentation to improve the continuity of care for WIC families. To alleviate confusion regarding these changes, the State agency has developed guidance for health care providers about the revised infants/children's form and the women's form required for Medical Documentation of WIC Formula and Approved WIC Foods. These revised forms will replace the current "WIC Prescription Form", beginning with the implementation of the new WIC Food Packages as of **July 1, 2009**.

If a WIC participant requires a special/exempt infant formula or formula due to a serious medical condition the Connecticut WIC Program will now require an ICD-9 code medical diagnosis to support the use of the requested products. For your convenience, we have provided an alphabetical listing of the most common nutrition-related ICD-9 codes on the appropriate revised Medical Documentation for WIC Formula and Approved WIC Foods form. Enclosed in this mailing is an advance draft copy of the form (s) and the guidelines for use in addition to a non-contract formula replacement table for your information.

What Else Do Health Care Providers Need to Know?

Under the new requirements WIC can now provide both a special/exempt formula *and* supplemental foods to WIC participants appropriate to their age and category in order to better meet their nutritional needs while managing their medical condition.

The following details the WIC foods that require a qualifying condition (ICD-9 medical diagnosis) with medical documentation by a health care provider licensed to write prescriptions in Connecticut.

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| • Any special/exempt infant formula provided to infants |
| • Any formula provided to children or women |
| • Any WIC foods provided to participants who are also receiving a special/exempt infant formula or child/adult formula due to a qualifying medical condition |
| • Any amount of authorized soy-based beverage (soymilk) or tofu issued to a child (ages 1-5) |
| • Cheese in excess of 1 pound issued to a child (ages 1-5) |
| • Authorized tofu (in amounts >4 pounds for all women) and cheese (in amounts >2 pounds for fully breastfeeding women or >1 for all other women) |

We understand that you are busy with your medical practice, but hope this advance notice of new WIC Regulations will help you and your staff navigate these changes more effectively. WIC is committed to working with health care providers to improve communications, clarify policies and help to ensure the nutritional needs of at risk women, infants and children in our state. Closer to July 1st, revised forms and instructions will be available on our website www.ct.gov/dph/wic under the "For Medical Providers" tab on the left navigation bar. We also plan to post a series of Frequently Asked Questions in order to address common concerns of health care providers regarding WIC Program policies.



A portion of the **April 30, 2009** Department of Public Health (DPH)/ CT-AAP teleconference will focus on **the new** WIC Medical Documentation Requirements. We encourage your participation.

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