

been purported to increase maternal milk supply, but a recent systematic review found insufficient evidence for the use of any type of galactogogues ([Mortel and Mehta, 2013](#)). For a discussion of galactogogues, including those mentioned here, see Appendix P, Protocol 9, in *Breastfeeding: A Guide for the Medical Profession* ([Lawrence and Lawrence, 2011](#)).

An acceptable alternative to breastfeeding is commercial iron-fortified formula. Similar to human milk, it supplies all nutrients needed by infants for the first 6 months. Unmodified whole cow's milk, low-fat cow's milk, skim milk, other animal milks, and imitation milk drinks are not acceptable as major sources of nutrition for infants because of their limited digestibility, increased risk of contamination, and lack of components needed for appropriate growth. Whole milk can cause iron-deficiency anemia in infants, possibly as a result of occult gastrointestinal blood loss. Pasteurized whole cow's milk is deficient in iron, zinc, and vitamin C and has a high renal solute load, which makes it undesirable for infants younger than 12 months old ([American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Nutrition, 2014](#)).

### Nursing Alert

Dietary fat in infants younger than 6 months old should not be restricted unless on specific medical advice. Substituting skim or low-fat milk is unacceptable because the essential fatty acids are inadequate, and the solute concentration of protein and electrolytes, such as sodium, is too high.

The amount of formula per feeding and the number of feedings per day vary among infants. Infants being fed on demand usually determine their own feeding schedule, but some infants may need a more planned schedule based on average feeding patterns to ensure sufficient nutrients. In general, the number of feedings decreases from six at 1 month old to four or five at 6 months old. Regardless of the number of feedings, the total amount of formula ingested will usually level off at about 32 ounces (946 ml) per day.

Honey should be avoided in the first 12 months because of the risk of botulism (see [Chapter 30](#)); pacifiers should not be coated with honey to encourage the infant to take it. Socializing the infant