

Most Baby Formula Claims Not Backed by Science

Analysis by [Dr. Joseph Mercola](#)

✓ Fact Checked

March 29, 2023

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › An international cross-sectional survey of 757 formulas sold in 15 countries found only 26% of the products used clinical trials and 90% of those carried a high risk of bias due to missing data or conclusions that were not supported by data
- › A Lancet Series on breastfeeding calls for greater regulation over "predatory" marketing aimed at new mothers that have influenced families, scientists and policy makers
- › The 2022 formula shortage highlighted a monopoly in the market that contributed to a disaster in which the lives of millions of babies were threatened, government regulations that effectively ban imports that meet or exceed FDA requirements and corporate greed that dictates infant nutrition
- › Albertson's grocery store app merges information about your food purchases, prescriptions and vaccinations in one place, aligning Big Food with Big Pharma and moving society one step closer to the globalist's end goal – limiting your freedoms

In the face of overwhelming scientific evidence that breastfeeding is the best nutrition for newborns and infants, infant formula companies make claims that formula strengthens immune health and brain development and supports digestive health.¹ Similac also claims to have included prebiotics that are structurally identical to those found in breast milk. Yet, a 2023 study found the health and nutrition claims for formulas are "not supported by robust clinical trial evidence."²

The World Health Organization,³ CDC⁴ and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)⁵ support exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. The AAP's 2022 policy

statement includes:⁶

“Breastfeeding and human milk are the normative standards for infant feeding and nutrition. The short- and long-term medical and neurodevelopmental advantages of breastfeeding make breastfeeding, or the provision of human milk, a public health imperative.”

Evidence-based benefits of breastfeeding for mother and baby are experienced immediately and over a lifetime. For example, according to the CDC,⁷ mothers have a lower risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, ovarian or breast cancer, and high blood pressure. Breastfed infants have a lower risk of obesity, asthma, ear infections, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) in preterm infants.

In addition to these physical benefits, science has also identified emotional benefits to mother and child.⁸ Mothers experience reduced stress in the early months of caring for their newborn and improved sensitivity to their infant’s needs. Breastfeeding improves cognitive performance in children and socio-affective response to their environment.

Infant Formula Claims Are Not Evidence Based

In a study published in February 2023, researchers sought to evaluate the nutrition claims made by infant formula companies in multiple countries. This international cross-sectional survey offers valuable evidence for parents, physicians and public health experts. Formula sold in 15 countries were surveyed, including those sold in the U.S., U.K., Norway, Nigeria, Russia, Germany, Canada, Italy, Japan and Australia.⁹

In total there were 757 formulas identified with a median of two health claims. There were 608 products that had at least one claim, the most common of which was that the formula helps support the development of the brain and/or nervous system and/or eyes. Other claims included strengthening or supporting the immune system or growth and development.

In many instances, the claims were made without referencing a specific ingredient responsible for the health effect. The most common ingredients cited in the formula

claims included long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, pre-, pro- or synbiotics and hydrolyzed protein.

Only 26% of the products attempted to support the claim with a clinical trial or a review and only 14% used clinical trials in humans, 90% of which carried a high risk of bias. The challenges with the trials included missing data or conclusions that were not supported by the data.¹⁰ From the data, the researchers concluded:¹¹

“Multiple ingredients were claimed to achieve similar health or nutrition effects, multiple claims were made for the same ingredient type, most products did not provide scientific references to support claims, and referenced claims were not supported by robust clinical trial evidence.”

Daniel Munblit, a scientist involved with the featured study, told Newsmax that the researchers were not on a crusade against formula, as they thought it should remain an option for mothers who choose not to, or cannot, breastfeed. However, the marketing should not include misleading claims that cannot be backed by scientific evidence.¹²

The featured study followed a 2020 paper¹³ in the BMJ by Munblit and colleagues. In the paper, they argue that marketing claims for infant formulas should be banned since unfounded claims may undermine breastfeeding efforts. They write:

“The current regulatory environment allows claims to be made for food products with low levels of evidence, but the potential harms associated with claims are higher for infant formula than for other foods.”

Irresponsible Marketing Undermines Breastfeeding

The featured study was released just one week after a different group of scientists¹⁴ called for greater regulation over the “predatory”¹⁵ nature of the industry’s marketing campaigns aimed at new mothers.

Despite evidence that breastfeeding is best, less than half of infants are breastfed, while global formula sales have risen to \$55 billion each year. The marketing techniques and

strategies have influenced families, policy and science, according to a Lancet paper published in February 2023.¹⁶ The authors write that the sales and marketing strategies are:

“... driven by multifaceted, well-resourced marketing strategies that portray CMF [commercial milk formula] products, with little or no supporting evidence, as solutions to common infant health and developmental challenges in ways that systematically undermine breastfeeding.”

According to another paper in the Lancet series,¹⁷ the U.S. government prioritizes trade interests over infant health, which was evident in the 2018 threats to enforce trade sanctions and withdraw military aid to Ecuador unless the country dropped a proposed resolution to protect and promote breastfeeding.

Lobby groups that protect formula manufacturers have cautioned employers against improving parental leave. Yet, data demonstrate that longer paid maternity leave leads to a higher potential that breastfeeding will continue, thus negatively impacting formula companies' bottom line. In the absence of paid leave, many mothers are forced to return to work.

Without a safe space to breastfeed or express milk at work or the appropriate space to store breast milk, many women are forced to turn to formula. Linda Richter is a distinguished professor at Wits University and a co-writer of two of the Lancet papers in the breastfeeding series. She commented in a press release:¹⁸

“The formula milk industry uses poor science to suggest, with little supporting evidence, that their products are solutions to common infant health and developmental challenges. Adverts claim specialized formulas alleviate fussiness, help with colic, prolong night-time sleep, and even encourage superior intelligence.

Labels use words like ‘brain’, ‘neuro’ and ‘IQ’ with images highlighting early development, but studies show no benefit of these product ingredients on academic performance or long-term cognition.”

2022 Formula Shortage Revealed Lack of Government Interest

One of the food shortages in early 2022 was infant formula. February 17, 2022,¹⁹ Abbott voluntarily recalled Similac, Alimentum and EleCare powdered formulas manufactured in Sturgis, Michigan, after five infants reportedly got sick with Cronobacter and Salmonella infections. Two of the babies died.

According to the FDA, the Sturgis facility failed inspection and was ordered to halt production until required sanitary measures were carried out. This came on the heels of a whistleblower report²⁰ submitted to the FDA in October 2021, alleging several health and safety compliance issues at the Sturgis facility, including falsification of records.

The compliance issues also included releasing untested formulas, lack of cleaning processes and hiding information during an FDA audit. The infant formula shortage highlighted three key factors that contributed to a disaster in which the lives of millions of babies were threatened.

The market had been allowed to be monopolized by so few companies that the takedown of a single plant created a disaster. Abbott is responsible for 43% of baby formula produced in the U.S. and a total of four companies control 90% of the market.²¹

The government has also implemented labeling regulations that effectively ban imports of formula, even if they meet or exceed FDA nutritional requirements. And finally, and far more importantly, is the fact that science has been ignored for decades and corporate greed has been allowed to dictate infant nutrition.

Most infant formulas contain a shocking amount of sugar, typically in the form of corn syrup and large amounts of dangerous linoleic acid from soy. In addition to the poor nutrition in infant formula, it appeared the U.S. government was unconcerned by the thought that babies were not being fed.

When asked at a press conference²² what parents should do if they don't have enough formula to feed their babies, then Biden administration press secretary Jennifer Psaki

said, "We certainly encourage any parent who has concerns about their child's health or well-being to call their doctor or pediatrician."

As Jimmy Dore notes,²³ it appeared that the press secretary was unaware that 91 million people are uninsured or underinsured and don't have access to a physician. And yet another point is that physicians would also not have access to infant formula as there was not enough being produced.

Is this the same response the government will have when future food shortages threaten the lives of children and adults: If you can't find food, then we encourage you to call your doctor?

Fake Foods Raise the Risk of Food Shortages

In June 2020,²⁴ Bill Gates announced he was funding the startup company BIOMILQ, which uses biotechnology to create lab-made human milk for babies.²⁵ BIOMILQ originally announced in May 2021²⁶ that they had successfully created human-like milk outside the breast.

The company boasted that it moved from proof of concept to producing human milk in just 11 months. While it acknowledges the product is not bioidentical to mother's milk, the company does claim that it's made in a sterile controlled environment, free of environmental toxins, food allergens and prescription medications that can be detected in breast milk.

In other words, they want you to believe that fake food produced in a lab just may be better than breast milk – or the same promise originally made by infant formula companies. Fifty years, and millions of people later, the evidence that formula is poor nutrition for babies is better understood, so it looks like the industry wants you to embrace the new kid on the block – BIOMILQ – to ensure their financial future.

BIOMILQ is another in a long list of fake foods that are promoted on the platform that they will somehow save the environment and the planet. Yet, they are ultimately

ultraprocessed foods that science has demonstrated²⁷ increase your risk for chronic disease and premature death.

And, as the formula shortage in 2022 demonstrated, once there is a monopoly on fake food, it won't take much to increase the risk that millions will go hungry and potentially starve when one or two plants are taken offline.

Grocery Industry App Links Food and Drug Purchases to Job

Fake meat and fake milk are ways to control the food supply and therefore your behavior. In yet another marketing and public relations coup, the grocery industry has aligned with Big Pharma to bring society closer to the globalists' end goal – limiting your freedoms.

Grocery store conglomerate Albertsons, which owns chains like Shaw's, Safeway, Tom Thumb and Jewel-Osco, made a move into the digital health space when it announced its app, "Sincerely Health."²⁸ The app encourages customers to connect data from wearable monitoring devices and track their prescriptions, grocery store purchases and vaccination appointments.

Albertsons is currently in talks to merge with Kroger, which would ultimately give the conglomerate control over 36% of the supermarket business. This is nearly the market share that Abbott holds over the baby formula market, which led to a critical formula shortage in 2022.

This merger between Big Food and Big Pharma also uses tracking technology to track your activity online and serve you ads and health advice they deem "relevant" content tailored just to you. Gathering this data about your activity gives the conglomerate details about your activities and a database of private health decisions they may use against you during the next public health emergency.

For example, if you are not up to date on your vaccinations or prescription drugs, the app may prevent you from purchasing food. Ultimately, data that pertains to purchases, such as food stamps, Medicare and Medicaid, could all be tied to the app.

When your medical history is handed over to grocery store chains, it increases the risk of food insecurity in one of the richest countries on the planet. However, it's important to note that the grocery industry operates on low margins and retailers are dependent on customer purchases. You can vote with your dollars when you choose to take your retail shopping to small stores that resist technology.

Sources and References

- ¹ Similac 360
- ^{2, 9, 11} BMJ, 2023;380
- ³ World Health Organization, Breastfeeding, Recommendations
- ^{4, 7} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Breastfeeding
- ^{5, 6} Pediatrics, 2022;150(1)
- ⁸ Bundesgesundheitsblatt Gesundheitsforschung Gesundheitsschutz. 2018; 61(8)
- ¹⁰ HealthWorld, February 16, 2023
- ¹² Newsmax, February 16, 2023
- ¹³ BMJ, 2020; 369(m875)
- ¹⁴ The Lancet, Breastfeeding 2023
- ^{15, 16, 17} The Lancet, 2023;401(10375)
- ¹⁸ NewsWise, February 10, 2023
- ¹⁹ FDA, August 1, 2022
- ²⁰ Rosa DeLauro, April 28, 2022
- ²¹ The Defender, May 23, 2022
- ²² YouTube, May 12, 2022
- ²³ YouTube, May 15, 2022 min 1:25
- ²⁴ Rumble, May 17, 2022, 1:39
- ²⁵ BIOMILQ, Our Science
- ²⁶ BIOMILQ, December 2, 2022
- ²⁷ The BMJ, 2019;365
- ²⁸ Exposing the Darkness, February 20, 2023, para 1, 2