

# Notice from the Executive Officer

## Temporary Benefit Nutrition Products:

### Shortage of infant formulas for infants with food allergies and certain medical conditions

June 24, 2022

Canada is currently experiencing a shortage of infant formulas for infants with food allergies and certain medical conditions. This issue is related to the unexpected closure of a major North American manufacturing facility operated by Abbott Laboratories in Michigan earlier this year. The formulas affected by this shortage include extensively hydrolyzed formulas and amino acid-based formulas.

Please note that there is no current shortage of **regular** infant formula in Canada.

Health Canada is coordinating the response to the shortage nationally and has indicated that the inventory of extensively hydrolyzed and amino acid-based formulas remains very low across the country. Health Canada has also indicated that this situation is likely to continue despite the recent resumption of production at the Abbott facility in Michigan.

- **Health Canada's Interim Policy:** Health Canada published an [Interim policy on the importation and sale of infant formulas, human milk fortifiers \(HMF\) and metabolic products for inborn errors of metabolism to mitigate shortages. - Canada.ca](#) on March 10, 2022, to allow additional products to be imported from other countries to mitigate the effects of the shortage. Appendix A to the policy specifies which products can be imported during the shortage. The list continues to be updated as the situation evolves, and we encourage you to consult it regularly.

These formulas will be available in pharmacies. It is strongly recommended that they be kept behind the pharmacy counter to better control inventory and reserve them for infants who need them most.

In the June 2022 Formulary update, the following imported nutrition products will be listed on the Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Formulary as Temporary Benefits and funded for eligible ODB recipients. In order to bill the ODB program for supplying a Temporary Benefit nutrition product

to an eligible ODB recipient, a pharmacy must have a new prescription and Nutrition Product form relating to the Temporary Benefit.

PIN	Brand Name, Strength & Dosage Form
09858156	Gerber Good Start Extensive HA Powder 400g Pk
09858157	Nutramigen Liquid Concentrate 384mL Can
09858158	Similac Alimentum 946mL Pk

The Maximum Allowable Reimbursement (MAR) mechanism described in [Edition 43 of the ODB Formulary document](#) will not apply to these Temporary Benefit nutrition products. Instead, the ministry will pay the benefit price of the Temporary Benefit (as listed in the Formulary), as well as the mark-up and dispensing fee prescribed in O. Reg. 201/96 under the *Ontario Drug Benefit Act*, as if the nutrition product were a listed drug product, minus the applicable co-payment. As a reminder, no co-payment may be charged for dispensing a listed drug product or listed substance for any ODB recipient who is less than 25 years old, unless the recipient is eligible through the Trillium Drug Program, in which case a \$2 co-payment may be charged. Please see the June 2022 ODB Formulary update for product and pricing details about each Temporary Benefit nutrition product.

This Executive Officer Notice is a ministry policy that pharmacy operators must comply with under section 3.2 of the Health Network System (HNS) Subscription Agreement for Pharmacy Operators.

#### Additional Information

For pharmacies: Please call the ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641