



To: CAHAN San Diego Participants

Date: February 24, 2022

From: Public Health Services

Health Advisory: Multistate Investigation of *Cronobacter sakazakii* Infections Associated with Powdered Infant Formula

Key Messages

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is investigating cases of [Cronobacter sakazakii infection in multiple states linked to powdered infant formula](#).
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a consumer alert and Abbott Nutrition [voluntarily recalled](#) specific lots of Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare brand formulas manufactured in Sturgis, MI dating back to 2020.
- *C. sakazakii* infections are extremely uncommon, but can cause devastating disease, especially in young infants.
- Review powdered infant formula exposure in infants admitted for evaluation of rule-out sepsis or invasive infections and report to San Diego County Public Health Services any case identified with *C. sakazakii* infection.

Situation

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are working together to [investigate cases of Cronobacter sakazakii infection in multiple states linked to powdered infant formula](#) (PIF) that originated from a single Abbott Nutrition production facility in Michigan (product is distributed nationwide). On February 17, 2022, FDA released an [advisory alert](#) for consumers to avoid purchasing or using certain lot codes of PIF, and Abbott issued a [voluntary recall](#) of Similac, Alimentum, and EleCare brand PIF manufactured in Sturgis, MI dating back to 2020 production dates. At this time, no California case-patients have been reported.

Background

C. sakazakii infections are extremely uncommon, but can cause devastating disease, especially in young infants less than 2 months of age. Symptoms of sepsis and meningitis may include poor feeding, irritability, temperature changes, jaundice, grunting breaths, and abnormal movements. *Cronobacter* infections are diagnosed by laboratory blood or spinal fluid culture. Forty percent of infants that developed bloodstream infections and meningitis have died. Infants under 2 months of age and those born prematurely or with immunocompromising conditions are at greatest risk.

From September through December 2021, the FDA received four consumer complaints of infant illness due to *C. sakazakii* (3) and *Salmonella* Newport (1) following consumption of PIF from Abbott Nutrition's Sturgis, MI facility. Limited patient information is available at this time; all four illnesses resulted in hospitalization, and *Cronobacter* may have contributed to death in one case. FDA inspection of the Sturgis, MI facility yielded several positive *Cronobacter* results from environmental sampling. Review of the firm's records also indicated prior environmental contamination with *C. sakazakii* and destruction of PIF due to the presence of *Cronobacter*. Abbott reported that testing of distributed PIF was negative for *C. sakazakii*. There have been no samples or past records indicating the presence of *Salmonella* in the facility; therefore, it is unclear if the *S. Newport* infection was associated with the consumption of PIF.

Actions Requested

1. Share information about recall with parents of at-risk infants.
2. Inquire about powdered infant formula exposure in any newborn presenting with systemic infection, sepsis, or meningitis.
3. Any invasive *C. sakazakii* infections occurring in an infant should be reported to the local health department. **Report any suspect and confirmed** *C. sakazakii* infections during business hours Monday through Friday to the [County Epidemiology Unit](#) by phone (619-692-8499) within one working day. Reports can also be sent anytime by email to Epi-CDReporting.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov or fax (858-715-6458).

Resources

- CDC: [Cronobacter Infection and Infants](#)
- FDA: [Investigation of Cronobacter and Salmonella Complaints: Powdered Infant Formula \(February 2022\)](#)
- Abbott: [Voluntarily Recalls Powder Formulas Manufactured at One Plant](#)
- Abbott: To look up recalled product lot numbers: [Home \(similacrecall.com\)](#)
- CDPH recall notice: [Abbott - Certain Infant Powder Formulas 02/17/22 \(ca.gov\)](#)

Thank you for your participation.

CAHAN San Diego

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