



**GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES**

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PRESS RELEASE

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**VIDOH Reassures the Public of Infant Formula Availability
Throughout the Territory**

US Virgin Islands — Commissioner Justa Encarnacion today reassured the public that there is presently no shortage of powdered infant formula in the Territory. All VI vendors that serve the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program participants with powdered infant formula products are currently stocked with adequate supplies of formulas. “Some vendors are very well stocked, others less so,” added Lorna Concepcion, Director of the VIDOH Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program, “There may be slightly less availability for some special formulas, but families have been able to get supplies to meet present needs.”

“The Virgin Islands WIC Program is within the top 5 programs in the nation for having the most infants who are breastfed,” continued Concepcion, “Seventy-one percent (71%) of infants on WIC in the V.I. are breastfed, so the impact on our WIC population may not be as drastic. We are encouraging our moms to increase breastfeeds as needed. Additionally, there is help for anyone wishing to relactate, which is rebuilding your breastmilk supply that has been reduced or dried up after weeks or months.”

Following the recall, Abbott Labs, the manufacturer for the VI WIC contract formula, increased production of its primary contracted WIC formula Similac Advance, 12.4 oz powder at other FDA-registered facilities. VI store shelves have remained well stocked with liquid formula products since they were not impacted by the recall. Similac Advance 12.4 oz and Similac Sensitive 12.5 oz. powder formulas, the high demand WIC formulas in the VI, were originally among the recall products, but are now restocked on store shelves with unrecalled product that has been produced in these other unaffected Abbott FDA-registered facilities.

The public is also reassured that work is ongoing by Abbott to improve the availability of special formula powder products produced by the impacted Sturgis manufacturing facility that remains unopened. These products include EleCare/EleCare Jr., Similac for Spit Up, and Similac Alimentum. Meade Johnson has also increased its production of Nutramigen, an alternate to Alimentum, which is also available on store shelves in the VI.

For more information about the powdered infant formula availability in the Virgin Islands contact Lorna Concepcion at lorna.concepcion@doh.vi.gov or call 340-718-1311 ext. 3748 or 3750.

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