



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Idaho WIC Training **WIC Food Packages**



What Will You Learn?

- Understand how food packages support good nutrition as well as support and encourage breastfeeding
- Describe the seven WIC food packages
- Assign and issue food packages

Instruction Level

Prerequisite for taking this course: WIC Eligibility Guidebook

Items Needed for This Course

- Idaho WIC Program Authorized Food List
- Sample/Voided WIC checks for Food List Activity
- Medical Documentation Form
- Idaho WIC Mother & Infant Food Issuance Grid, found at www.wic.dhw.idaho.gov, Staff, Training, Training Links, Breastfeeding.
- Idaho WIC Program Policy Manual (IWPPM), Chapter 7: Food Delivery and Chapter 6: Breastfeeding Promotion and Support found at www.wic.dhw.idaho.gov, Staff, Policy Manual
- No TRAIN LMS online course exists for this guidebook

Recommended Time

- Approximate time it takes to complete the WIC course: 1-2 hours
- Approximate time it takes to complete the activities and discussion: 1-2 hours

Module 1: WIC Food Packages

WIC food packages provide healthy supplemental foods to WIC participants. WIC food packages and nutrition education are the primary ways WIC impacts the dietary quality and habits of participants. The WIC Program was never intended to be the main source of food for a person or family. Food packages are selected based on research that shows which foods are most needed to provide a more complete healthy diet. WIC food packages are intended to address the additional nutritional needs of low-income:

- Pregnant, breastfeeding, non-breastfeeding postpartum women
- Infants
- Children (up to age 5)

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), a federal agency under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), oversees the WIC Program. They also oversee a variety of other nutrition assistance programs which work together to provide a more complete diet to low-income persons. The largest of these programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or Food Stamps) provides general food assistance intended to increase access to food for low-income households. Low-income families can receive benefits from more than one of these programs.

WIC Food Packages

WIC food packages help reinforce the nutrition education messages provided to participants. The food packages can affect the dietary quality and habits of infants, children, and mothers served by WIC. Nutrition education helps participants make informed decisions in choosing foods that, together with the supplemental foods provided by WIC, can meet their total dietary needs. The intent is to help participants continue healthful dietary practices after leaving the program.

WIC food packages are intended to meet these broad dietary goals:

- Align consistently with national dietary recommendations
- Support improved overall healthy eating
- Meet the dietary recommendations for infants and children under 5
- Encourage and support for breastfeeding
- Reinforce the nutrition education messages provided to participants
- Appeal to a wide group of individuals

The USDA sets regulations (often referred to as “federal regulations”) regarding WIC food packages and the foods that can be purchased by WIC participants. Each State WIC Program authorizes specific foods that meet the federal regulations. Additionally, in Idaho, authorized WIC foods are chosen based upon the following considerations:

- Nutritional content

- Cost
- Availability across the state
- Participant preferences (determined through surveys and comments)
- Cultural considerations
- Variety
- Safety

Foods Provided by WIC

- Foods high in vitamins and minerals, like fruits and vegetables, promote good health and prevent diseases.
- Dairy products, like milk, cheese, and yogurt, help to build strong bones and teeth, and promote growth.
- Foods high in protein, like eggs, canned fish, and peanut butter, promote growth.
- Dried beans, peas, and lentils are high in vitamins, minerals, and protein. They are a good source of iron and promote growth.
- WIC fruit and vegetable juice is high in vitamin C which helps the body to absorb iron.
- WIC breakfast cereal is low in sugar and high in iron. Many WIC breakfast cereals are also a good source of whole grains.
- WIC whole wheat bread and other whole grains, such as rice and tortillas, are high in many vitamins, minerals (ie: iron), and fiber. Eating more whole grains helps with disease prevention.

Understanding WIC Food Packages

A food package is a group of foods that a WIC participant receives based upon category and nutritional need. Each food package has a variety of options to best meet the needs of the participant. In the WIC computer system (WISPr) specific food packages will automatically be displayed to select from as information is entered into the system. It is important to understand the food packages available in order to adequately educate our participants as well as ensure we are providing the appropriate food package. There is a total of seven food packages. Within each of the main seven food packages, there are multiple options available.

Food Package 1: Infants birth through 5 months

Fully and partially breastfeeding:

WIC promotes breast milk as the healthiest food for babies. WIC provides breastfeeding counseling and support to help a mom start and continue to breastfeed her infant.

WIC makes every effort to help mom and baby have a positive breastfeeding experience. During the first month of life, no formula is provided to a breastfeeding baby. To protect their milk supply, women need to fully breastfeed their infants in the first month. Refer to the breastfeeding

chapters of this manual and the Idaho WIC Policy and Procedure manual (IWPPM) for more information about offering breastfeeding support.

Partially breastfed infants one month of age and older are issued infant formula (only the amount actually being used) so that breastfeeding is supported. Refer to the *Idaho WIC Mother & Infant Food Issuance Grid* to assess how much formula an infant should be issued. This can be found on the Idaho WIC website under Staff, Training, Training Links, Breastfeeding.

- Food packages issued to partially breastfed infants are routinely monitored to prevent over-issuance of formula.
- Powdered formula is the form of choice for breastfed infants because exactly the amount needed can be made and given to the infant. Concentrate formula makes 26 ounces and the unused formula could go to waste or the mother might give the infant more than needed to prevent having to throw the formula away.

Formula Feeding:

The WIC Program is federally required to contract for the standard infant formulas it provides. Every few years, formula companies bid for the WIC contract. The contract is awarded to the qualifying company(s) that provides the lowest price. The contract brand infant formulas are routinely issued to WIC infants receiving formula. Most infant formulas are very similar and infants can tolerate a variety of brands. WIC provides contract brand infant formula for babies who are not breastfed or babies who are partially breastfed (age one month and older). Idaho WIC does not provide substitutes for standard milk-based or soy-based formula that is not our contract formula. As the contract formulas can change, ask your trainer what the current contract infant formulas are.

Formula can be issued in one of three forms:

- Powdered formula is the most common form. It is mixed with water before feeding.
- Concentrate is a liquid which is also mixed with water before feeding.
- Ready-to-feed requires no mixing before feeding. Ready-to-feed should be issued very rarely. It is only issued with approval from a local agency registered dietitian under these circumstances:
 - unsafe water supply
 - lack of refrigeration
 - the participant is homeless
 - the infant’s caregiver has difficulty correctly mixing concentrate or powder formula

Fully formula fed infants receive a supplemental amount of formula each month. Just as infants grow and develop the first year of life, formula amounts provided by WIC differ depending on the age of the infant and whether the infant is partially breastfed. For some infants, these amounts

may supply all the formula they need. For other infants, the family may have to purchase additional formula. Fully formula fed babies on WIC get the following amounts:

Table 1: Formula Amounts for Fully Formula Fed Infants

Age in months	Number of cans to provide per month		
	Birth through 3 months	4 - 5 months	6 - 11 months
Full Formula:			
Powdered	9 cans	10 cans	7 cans
Concentrate	31 cans	34 cans	24 cans
Ready-to-feed	26 cans	28 cans	20 cans

Infants needing an exempt infant formula or WIC-eligible medical food because of a medical condition, need a completed medical documentation form. They should be seen by the local agency Registered Dietitian (RD). Exempt infant formulas and WIC-eligible medical foods are discussed further in the Food Package 3 section.

Food Package 2: Infants 6 months through 11 months (up to first birthday)

At six months of age, infants are issued infant cereal and infant food fruits and vegetables along with formula.

Fully breastfeeding infants are issued more infant food fruits and vegetables as well as infant food meats. The greater amounts of foods and the addition of meats are a bonus to moms who are fully breastfeeding to reward their efforts and encourage continued breastfeeding. Infant food meats are also included to support the iron needs of fully breastfed infants.

Infant foods are provided after six months of age for several important reasons:

- Taste - babies need to be introduced to a variety of tastes and flavors.
- Texture - babies need to experience different textures which are part of learning.
- Development - babies are more likely to be developmentally ready to start eating solids foods around six months of age.
- Health - babies need to be encouraged to eat fruits and vegetables as recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans to start them off on a healthy diet.

Food Packages 1 and 2 are broken into three different infant feeding categories:

- Full **B**reastfeeding (B)
- **P**artial Breastfeeding (P)
- Full **F**ormula (F)

To determine what food package to issue an infant, you need to know the following:

- Infant's age
 - Birth through 3 months or 4 through 5 months
 - 6 through 11 months (up to first birthday)
- Infant's feeding category
 - Full **B**reastfeeding (B)
 - **P**artial Breastfeeding (P)
 - Full **F**ormula (F)
- Type of formula, if needed
 - Form: powder, concentrate, ready-to-feed (RTF)

Table 2: Food Packages 1 and 2

Age	Food Package 1		Food Package 2	
	Birth - 3 months	4 - 5 months	6 - 11 months	
Feeding Category	Infant Formula		Infant Formula	Infant Foods
Full B reastfeeding* (B)	Breastfeeding education and support to help mom and baby breastfeed as long and as much as mutually desired. Feeding Category Age in months			24 ounces infant cereal 64 (4oz) jars of baby fruit and/or vegetables** 31 (2.5 oz) jars of baby meats
P artial Breastfeeding* (P)	See Table3: Supplemental Powdered Formula for Partially Breastfed Infant on next page or the <i>Idaho WIC Mother & Infant Food Issuance Grid</i> .			24 ounces infant cereal 32 (4oz) jars of baby fruit and/or vegetables***
Full F ormula(F)				
Powdered	9 cans	10 cans	7 cans	
Concentrate	31 cans	34 cans	24 cans	
Ready-to-feed	26 cans	28 cans	20 cans	

* WIC does not provide supplemental formula to breastfed infants less than (<) 1 month of age.

**\$8.00 CVV can be substituted for 32 jars of baby fruits and/or vegetables for infants over 9 months.

***\$4.00 CVV can be substituted for 16 jars of baby fruits and/or vegetables for infants over 9 months.

Table 3: Supplemental Powdered Formula for Partially Breastfed Infant

Usual Daily Intake of Formula by Infant	Percent Breastfeeding	Number of Cans to Provide per Month	
		Age of infant in months	Number of Cans to provide per month (12.9 ounce powder Yield: 93 – 95 ounces per can)
1 to 4 oz. per day	75%	1 through 11	1 can
5 to 8 oz. per day	75%	1 through 11	2 cans
9 to 16 oz. per day	50%	1 through 3 4 through 5 6 through 11	4 cans 5 cans 4 cans
Greater than 16 oz. per day	25%*	1 through 3 4 through 5 6 through 11	6 cans 7 cans 5 cans
Breastfeeding at least one time per day	25% Full Formula	1 through 3 4 through 5 6 through 11	9 cans 10 cans 7 cans

* A breastfeeding woman of an infant who is 6 months or older and receiving greater than (>) 50% supplemental formula will no longer be eligible to receive a food package.

Note: WIC does not provide supplemental formula to breastfed infants less than (<) 1 month of age.

Food Package 3: Participants with Qualifying Conditions (typically medical diagnosis)

Occasionally, an infant, child, or woman may need a specialized nutritional product because of a medical condition. An RD in your clinic will provide guidance in these situations. These specialized nutritional products fall into three categories:

- Exempt Infant Formula is intended as a food substitute for human milk for use by infants who have inborn errors of metabolism, prematurity, low birth weight, or who otherwise have an unusual medical or dietary condition.
- WIC-eligible Medical Food refers to certain products that are specifically formulated to provide nutritional support for participants (women, infants, or children) with a diagnosed medical condition where regular food is replaced, restricted, or inadequate. Such WIC-eligible medical foods must serve as a food, meal, or diet (may be nutritionally complete or incomplete) and provide a source of calories and one or more nutrients; be designed for

digestion via an oral or tube feeding; and may not be a regular food, drug, flavoring, or enzyme.

- Contract brand infant formula needed for a child.

Participants receiving Food Package 3 can also receive all of the supplemental WIC foods allowed for their category as determined by their healthcare provider and specified on the Medical Documentation form. To issue a Food Package 3 in the WIC computer system, Medical Documentation and/or RD approval is required. Locate a Medical Documentation form on the WIC website www.wic.dhw.idaho.gov. Under Partners, Forms, Medical Documentation.

Note: Infants age six months or older who receive an exempt infant formula or WIC-eligible medical food but cannot tolerate infant foods, can receive the greater amount of formula normally issued to a 4 or 5 month old infant. This only applies to infants receiving a Food Package 3 and no infant foods.

Medicaid Coverage

For a participant who is active in Medicaid, Medicaid provides the exempt infant formula or medical food. Medicaid does not provide standard infant formulas. WIC can provide a food package if foods are tolerated.

Refer to IWPPM for more information on the requirements for issuing Food Package 3.

Food Package 4: Children 1 through 4 years of age (up to 5th birthday)

A child grows rapidly. The brain, teeth, and bones are all developing. Nutrition is very important during this time. Many studies have shown that children from low-income families are more vulnerable to anemia, poor growth or overweight, and dental problems.

Federal regulations require children under age two to receive whole milk and children over the age of two to receive low fat milk (1% or skim). Whole milk provides needed calories in a time of growth. Switching to low fat milk at age two ensures continued nutrients and protein are provided without as many calories. For children over the age of two that require more calories, 2% milk can be issued with RD approval.

Food Package 4 is divided into two categories:

- Children age 1 through 2 years (whole milk)
- Children age 2 through 4 years (low fat milk)

Food Package 4 contains the following amounts of foods:

- 2 (64 ounce) containers of vitamin C-fortified juice
- 4 gallons of milk (1 pound of cheese and/or 1 quart of yogurt can be substituted for up to 1 gallon of milk at the rate of 1 pound of cheese for 3 quarts of milk and/or 1 quart of yogurt for 1 quart of milk)

- 36 ounces of iron-fortified cereal
- 1 dozen eggs
- 32 ounces of whole wheat bread/whole grain
- 1 pound of dry beans, peas, or lentils or 16-18 ounces of peanut butter
- \$8 cash value voucher for fresh fruits and vegetables

Children with the following conditions can receive soy milk instead of cow's milk in Food Package 4 with RD approval:

- Milk allergy
- Severe lactose maldigestion
- Vegan diet

Women's Food Packages

The food packages for children and for women are the same except the amounts for women are different. Some women can also receive canned fish.

Pregnancy, lactation, and the postpartum period (after the baby is born) are all times of increased nutrient needs. Nutrient deficiencies at these times, particularly during pregnancy, can have serious consequences for mother and baby. The foods in the WIC food package provide many nutrients that are important for women.

Extra foods (canned fish and additional milk, cheese, fresh fruits and vegetables, peanut butter, and beans) are provided for women fully breastfeeding their infants, partially breastfeeding multiple infants, and women pregnant with more than one infant. Canned fish provides additional protein and essential fats. By offering something extra to women fully breastfeeding an infant, WIC recognizes the value of providing an infant with the gold standard in infant feeding: breast milk.

Women who are partially breastfeeding and providing some formula to a single infant do not receive the fully breastfeeding package but do receive the same food package as pregnant women.

Postpartum (non-breastfeeding) women receive less food than pregnant or breastfeeding women. In general, this is because the nutrient needs of a postpartum woman are less so the food package is adjusted to provide somewhat less food. However, postpartum women do need the foods provided by WIC to help restore nutrients lost during pregnancy.

For women, food packages 5, 6, and 7 are available for categories (P) Pregnant, (B) Breastfeeding, and (N) Postpartum.

Food Package 5: Pregnant and partially breastfeeding women

Food Package 5 is issued to the following participants:

- Pregnant woman (P)

- Partially breastfeeding woman (B) who's infant is not receiving greater than (>) 50% formula food package

Food Package 5 contains the following amounts of foods:

- 3 (11.5-12 ounce) frozen concentrate containers of vitamin C-fortified juice
- 5 ½ gallons of milk (1 pound of cheese and/or 1 quart of yogurt can be substituted for up to 1 gallon of milk at the rate of 1 pound of cheese for 3 quarts of milk and/or 1 quart of yogurt for 1 quart of milk)
- 36 ounces of iron-fortified cereal
- 1 dozen eggs
- 16 ounces of whole wheat bread/whole grain
- 1 pound of dry beans, peas, or lentils
- 16-18 ounces of peanut butter
- \$11 cash value voucher for fresh fruits and vegetables

Food Package 6: Postpartum and partially breastfeeding

Only issued for up to 6 months after delivery.

Food Package 6 is issued to the following participants:

- Non breastfeeding postpartum woman (N)
- Partially breastfeeding woman (B) whose infant is receiving greater than (>) 50% formula food package

Food Package 6 contains the following amounts of foods:

- 2 (11.5-12 ounce) frozen concentrate containers of vitamin C-fortified juice
- 4 gallons of milk (1 pound of cheese and/or 1 quart of yogurt can be substituted for up to 1 gallon of milk at the rate of 1 pound of cheese for 3 quarts of milk and/or 1 quart of yogurt for 1 quart of milk)
- 36 ounces of iron-fortified cereal
- 1 dozen eggs
- 1 pound of dry beans, peas, or lentils or 16-18 ounces of peanut butter
- \$11 cash value voucher for fresh fruits and vegetables

Food Package 7: Fully breastfeeding women, partially breastfeeding multiples, pregnant with multiples

Food Package 7 is issued to the following participants:

- Breastfeeding woman (B) whose infant does not receive any formula from WIC (this included women that are breastfeeding on average at least one time per day and receiving formula from another source such as Medicaid)
- Breastfeeding woman (B) who is partially breastfeeding multiple infants (2 or more)
- Pregnant woman (P) of multiple infants (2 or more)

In order for a pregnant woman of multiple infants or a woman partially breastfeeding multiple infants to receive food package 7, NRC 335 (multi-fetal gestation) must be entered in the WIC computer system.

Food Package 7* contains the following amounts of foods:

- 3 (11.5-12 ounce) frozen concentrate containers of vitamin C-fortified juice
- 6 gallons of milk (1 pound of cheese and/or 1 quart of yogurt can be substituted for up to 1 gallon of milk at the rate of 1 pound of cheese for 3 quarts of milk and/or 1 quart of yogurt for 1 quart of milk)
- 36 ounces of iron-fortified cereal
- 1 pound of cheese
- 2 dozen eggs
- 16 ounces of whole wheat bread/whole grain
- 30 ounces of fish (canned)
- 1 pound of dry beans, peas, or lentils **and** 16-18 ounces of peanut butter
- \$11 cash value voucher for fresh fruits and vegetables

*Women fully breastfeeding multiple infants receive one and half times the amounts of foods as listed above. This is designated by an “M”.

Food Package 7M

Food Package 7M is issued to the following participants:

- Woman fully breastfeeding (B) multiple infants (two or more)

In order for a participant to receive Food Package 7M, the following must occur:

- NRC 335 (multi-fetal gestation) must be entered in WISPr
- Both infants must be 100% breastfeeding

Note: Common food packaging sizes are not available in sizes that are necessary to provide the appropriate amount each month. For example, peanut butter is found commonly in an 18oz container and not a 27oz container. Therefore, in month one a participant would receive 36oz of peanut butter (or two 18oz containers) and in month two a participant would receive one 18oz container.

Food Package 7M contains the following amounts of foods:
Amounts averaged over two month timeframe.

Month 1:

- 5 (11.5-12 ounce) frozen concentrate containers of juice
- 9 gallons of milk (1 pound of cheese and/or 1 quart of yogurt can be substituted for up to 1 gallon of milk at the rate of 1 pound of cheese for 3 quarts of milk and/or 1 quart of yogurt for 1 quart of milk)

- 54 ounces of iron fortified cereal
- 2 pounds of cheese
- 3 dozen eggs
- 24 ounces of whole wheat bread/whole grain
- 45 ounces of fish (canned)
- 2 pounds of dry beans, peas, or lentils
- 2 (16-18 ounce) containers of peanut butter
- \$16 cash value voucher for fresh fruits and vegetables

Month 2:

- 5 (11.5-12 ounce) frozen concentrate containers of juice
- 9 gallons of milk (1 pound of cheese and/or 1 quart of yogurt can be substituted for up to 1 gallon of milk at the rate of 1 pound of cheese for 3 quarts of milk and/or 1 quart of yogurt for 1 quart of milk)
- 54 ounces of iron fortified cereal
- 1 pound of cheese
- 3 dozen eggs
- 24 ounces whole wheat bread/whole grain
- 45 ounces of fish (canned)
- 1 pound of dry beans, peas, or lentils
- 16-18 ounces of peanut butter
- \$17 cash value voucher for fresh fruits and vegetables

Food Package Options

While only seven food packages are available, each food package has options which create hundreds of food packages to choose from. The WIC computer system will automatically list the appropriate food packages based on the category of the participant, the Nutrition Risk Criteria that has been assigned at the certification, and the percent breastfeeding entered.

Some questions to help select the correct food packages are:

Food Packages 1 or 2 (infants):

- What contract brand infant formula, milk or soy based?
- What form – powder or concentrate?
- Is there a reason, such as an unsafe water supply, to issue ready-to-feed formula? (See IWPPM)

Food Packages 4 thru 7 (children and women):

Dairy Options:

- Does a participant prefer more milk or to substitute some milk for cheese and/or yogurt? Three quarts of milk can be exchanged for one pound of cheese, and 1 quart of milk can be exchanged for 1 quart of yogurt.

- Does the participant need a different type of milk such as lactose reduced or goat's milk? Participants can get acidophilus, lactose reduced/free, soy, or goat's milk with approval by the local agency RD.
- How does the participant want to purchase their milk – gallon (preferred), half gallon, quart, evaporated, powdered?

Peanut butter or dried beans, peas, or lentil options:

- Does a child or a postpartum woman want peanut butter or dried beans, peas, or lentils?
- Does a pregnant or breastfeeding woman want all peanut butter (2 jars), peanut butter and dried beans, peas, or lentils, or all dried beans, peas, or lentils (2 pounds)?

Homeless Options

The homeless food package options may not be appropriate for all homeless participants. Often, a standard food package will work for a homeless participant. Tailoring should be based upon the participant's needs, such as access to a stove or refrigerator.

The following options are found in the appropriate food package based on the participant's category and age.

Infants

Formula

- Infants eligible to receive a homeless food package may receive 8 ounce bottles of ready-to-feed infant formula in place of standard powder, concentrate, or 32 ounce (quart) ready-to-feed.

Children or Women

Juice

- Single-serving juices (5.5-6 oz.) can be issued instead of frozen containers or 64 ounce bottles. The maximum amount of juice allowed cannot be provided if single-serving juices are issued. The responsible adult should be made aware that they will get fewer total ounces of juice.

Beans

- 64 ounces of canned beans (16 oz. or smaller) can be issued instead of dried beans, peas, or lentils.

Note: Later in your training, you will practice assigning food packages in the WIC computer system training environment.



Complete Activity 1 in your Activities Packet

Module 2: Authorized Food List

Participants know which foods are approved by using the Authorized Foods List which is a color photo listing of foods allowed by the Idaho WIC program. Ask your trainer where these are located in your clinic. Participants may also download the WICShopper App to access a mobile version of the Authorized Food List. This app allows participants to scan UPC barcodes on foods to see if they are WIC authorized foods.

The Authorized Foods List and WICShopper App provide information regarding shopping for WIC foods. You will review the Authorized Foods List with WIC participants/responsible adults. You are responsible for educating the participant/responsible adult on each section of the food list that pertains to them. The following is a brief overview of some sections of the Authorized Food List:

Buy/Do Not Buy

Each section lists what foods can and cannot be purchased with WIC checks/CVV's.

Special Features of Certain Sections

Fruits and Vegetables

- Review the chart for determining the cost of produce.
- Educate participants/responsible adult on this chart as it will help them easily track how much money they are spending on fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Review options for paying the difference or putting items back if the participant goes over the amount of their CVV.

Cereals/Whole Grains

- Pictures of all the cereals and whole grains that can be purchased with WIC checks are shown.
- Women and children receive 36 ounces of cereal.
- Women receive 16 ounces of whole grains and children receive 32 ounces.
- Several combinations are illustrated to show how many boxes of cereal make up 36 ounces of cereal.



Complete Activities 2, 3 & 4 in your Activities Packet