

Raising Healthy Babies For Less

(NAPSA)—There's good news for families with small babies that are seeking big savings.

By law, less expensive store-brand infant formula must meet the same strict nutritional and packaging regulations determined by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as more expensive national brands. Experts agree mother's milk is best for babies—and the least expensive—but many parents choose to supplement breast-feeding with formula or to formula-feed exclusively.

Other ways to save include:

- Get help from service and religious organizations, state WIC agencies and food banks.
- Cut out the coupons in this paper and look for others on the Internet at www.babyformulaquiz.com.

- Look into different formulas. Store brands must offer the same safe, high-quality, affordable infant nutrition yet may cost up to 50 percent less than national brands.

The FDA and the American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee on Nutrition establish strict guidelines concerning ingredients and their levels in infant formula; all U.S. manufacturers have to conform to these rules. In addition, all infant formulas must demonstrate the ability to assist growth, development and mineral absorption equal to mother's milk before they may be sold in the United States.

That may be one reason that, according to a study by ACNielsen, sales of store-brand—otherwise known as private label—infant



Parents can give their babies top-quality formula and still save money by buying store brands, which must meet the same strict nutritional and packaging regulations as the more expensive kind.

formulas have grown by over 30 percent in the last year.

Many doctors agree. "New parents today are met with a dizzying array of marketing messages when it comes to doing what is best for their babies," said Dr. Barbara Levine, Associate Professor of Nutrition in Medicine, Weill Medical College of Cornell University. "Nowhere is this truer than in the area of infant formulas. Thanks to strict government regulation, the fact is that there is very little, if any, differentiation in the nutritional values touted by the various national brands on the market, which means it's OK to switch your baby to a store-brand formula."

The less expensive formula can be found at most major drug-stores, supermarkets and bulk-sales stores.

For more information, visit www.parentschoiceformula.com or www.membersmarkformula.com.