

Baby formula ban meant to boost breast feeding

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BOSTON, Massachusetts (WHDH) - Massachusetts will become the second state where hospitals are voluntarily banning baby formula giveaways for new mothers.

The hospitals hope to promote breast feeding, and it's something more and more birth facilities are doing around the country.

"What we are talking about giving stuff things to take home. Gift bags that are really samples of formula to get moms formula feeding," said Ann Merewood, Boston Medical Center Breast-Feeding Center Director.

Those gift bags are now a thing of the past in Massachusetts.

All 49 birth facilities in the state have voluntarily eliminated the giveaways.

"Breast-feeding is undermined when women go home with these bags. Women are less likely to breast-feed and they're less likely to breast-feed exclusively," said Merewood.

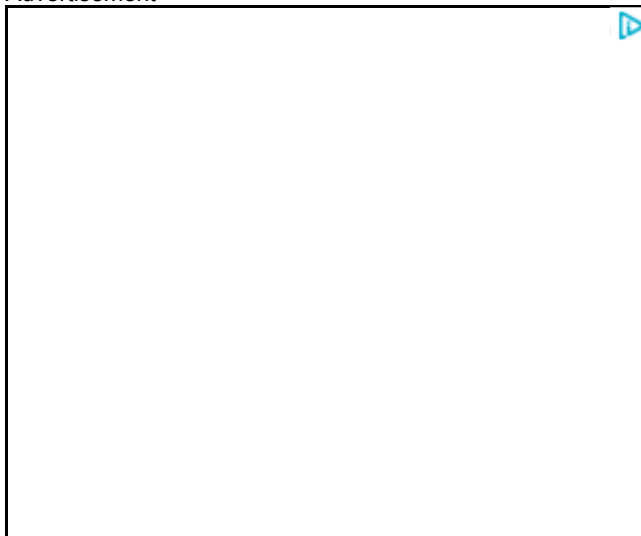
The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that mothers exclusively breastfeed during the first six months.

The International Formula Council issued a statement in response.

It reads, "If parents are discouraged from using infant formula, they may resort to inferior methods of infant feeding which can cause serious nutritional deficiencies and put their infant's health at risk."

Not giving away infant formula at birth facilities is becoming a national trend.

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