

## Background information about infant milks

### The infant milk market in the UK

The infant milk market in the UK is dominated by four major brands:

- Aptamil (Nutricia, owned by Danone Early Life Nutrition)
- Cow & Gate (Nutricia, owned by Danone Early Life Nutrition)
- SMA Nutrition (owned by Nestlé)
- Hipp Organic (owned by Hipp).

The UK baby milk market was worth £426 million in 2018. The Mintel Baby food and drink report (Mintel, 2019) reported that in 2018 Danone had 81% of the market by sales and 75% by volume. Aptamil was the brand leader accounting for 52% of all sales. Cow & Gate (also owned by Danone) had 31% of market share and SMA (Nestlé) 13%. Hipp had 4% of the market.

Both Aptamil and Cow & Gate brands received substantial advertising support in 2018, which they use to support the brand across a range of products. The total above the line, online display and direct mail advertising expenditure on baby food and drink was £16.5million in the UK in 2018. £13.2 million was spent on marketing infant milks, the majority of which is spent on follow-on formula advertising.

Mintel also looks at factors influencing the purchase of infant milks was also considered, and the main factor determining parental choice of milk amongst their panel was 'brand'. This is important as it is the support given to brands through advertising, through the promotion of milks to health professionals and using health professionals as part of the online marketing to health professionals and at conferences that promotes the brand integrity. The report highlights the importance of 'brand loyalty' in the market and parent's being loath to swap brands that they think suit their child. Companies spend considerable funds on promoting brands to health professionals, and in supporting health professionals through invitations to conferences, study days, paying for travel and accommodation at conferences, lunches and trips abroad to help maintain professional loyalty to their brand as well. Other key factors that impact on purchasing choices includes price, age range featured on the pack, easy availability through supermarket and the perception that the product covers a babies nutritional needs. Less important but still highlighted as factors are convenient packaging, products being organic, containing specific ingredients such as prebiotics, offering health benefits or designed for babies with special requirements.

Marketing reports reinforce the importance of advertising by companies to maintain their brand and market share and to promote new products and extend products as children age. The fact that brand is the most important factor for purchasers is seen as very positive in the commercial world, and highlights again the need to avoid the use of any materials produced by infant formula manufacturers by health care workers.

Two supermarket own-brand infant formula are currently available in the UK: Mamia at ALDI and Sainsbury's 'Little Ones'. Other infant milks such as Holle, NANNYcare, Kabrita and Kendamil formula have a small market share at the moment, and two brands are available mail order only: Arla Baby & Me and Castlemil. Other milks from overseas may be available

in UK retail outlets that cater for specific immigrant communities, and some shops may offer milks that are directly imported, and which may not conform to UK regulations on infant formula and follow-on formula. Infant milks from around the world are also sold on websites such as ebay. Parents should be strongly discouraged from buying any milk that has not been notified here in the UK.

Mintel (2019). *Baby Foods and Drinks*. Mintel. London.