



Pei Sze, mum of Olivia, 7 months+

# A tale of two babies

Siti and Pei Sze are mothers who discovered that their babies were having issues with milk formula. They found their way through the maze of information available on the topic to find happy endings for their babies.

It wasn't long before Ong Pei Sze noticed that not all was right with her 7 month old baby after mastitis necessitated the feeding of milk formula for supplementation.

Said Pei Sze, "Olivia had red rashes on her face and body, and was passing very watery greenish poo. She also appeared uncomfortable and more fussy than normal."

She continued, "I did not notice it initially, but the rashes became redder and more noticeable, especially around the mouth. I had also originally thought the watery greenish poo was due to a change in her diet, but it did not go away even after 2 weeks. She also seemed to have stuffy nose."

These unnatural signs became cause for concern. "She seemed uncomfortable and more cranky than usual. I was also aware of allergies, and suspected that the symptoms were results of the milk I was feeding her."

Siti Rozianah Bte Amat too, noticed similar symptoms, with her year old baby, Rian-Al Fahyim. But it was the development of a mild scaly skin rash, which eventually progressed into signs of abdominal pain, excessive crying, rashes on neck and around the mouth area and irritability, especially after feedings, which galvanised Siti into action.

Siti told LiveWell Baby, "I became especially concerned since his immune system would probably be weak and watching an baby struggle with red rashes is never easy."

## The Plot Thickens

Pei Sze's friends suggested that she changed to another milk to see if the symptoms would get better, while Siti was advised to switch to a special hypoallergenic formula, and sought out information about hypoallergenic milk formulas via the internet and health magazines at clinics.

Eventually, Pei Sze recounted, "The pediatrician gave us a sample tin of Dumex Mamil Gold H.A. Step 2 milk powder and we let Olivia try it. We switched her to this milk immediately."

Siti recalled, "After the advice from family and friends and seeking doctor's advice, we decided to take Dumex Mamil Gold H.A. Step 2."

## Two Happy Endings

Both Pei Sze and Siti's babies were eventually put on hypoallergenic milk formula because of their high risk of allergies. Pei Sze's baby has a family history of allergies - her husband suffers from severe atopic dermatitis, and reacts badly and easily to a lot of foods, heat and irritants, including cow's milk and dairy products, while Siti's baby had sensitive skin, itchiness and rashes at birth.

And with these two happy endings, Pei Sze and Siti have some tips for new mothers who may be facing similar situations.

Says Siti, "To those parents who are concerned about their baby, don't worry, because your child may grow out of his allergy. Your child will need to see a doctor regularly and be retested at intervals to see if he has outgrown his allergy."

Pei Sze advises, "Do observe and monitor your baby especially when you start a new diet. Should there be any signs of rashes, or if your baby become more irritable and fussy, it may be due to the diet." **LWB**



Siti, mum of Rian-Al Fahyim, 1 year+



Dr. Liew Woei Kang, Paediatrician with special interests in Paediatrics, Paediatrics Allergy, Immunology & Rheumatology at SBCC Baby & Child Clinic, sheds light on why certain babies are recommended hypoallergenic milk formula.

**LWB:** Can you tell us what prompts doctors to recommend hypoallergenic milk formula?

**Dr. Liew:** Hypoallergenic (H.A.) formulas are indicated for prevention of allergy (eczema) in babies born to families with a history of atopy.

**LWB:** What common signs do the babies have on presentation?

**Dr. Liew:** Atopic dermatitis or eczema present as red bumpy and dry rashes on the skin of babies. It often involves the cheeks, trunk, and limbs in babies.

**LWB:** What causes these signs and symptoms?

**Dr. Liew:** The main underlying cause of eczema is dry and sensitive skin. Sometimes there is an abnormal immune response involving food and environmental allergic triggers. The common symptoms include the development of rashes, itching and dryness of skin.

**LWB:** How does H.A. formula help, and how effective is it at relieving these symptoms?

**Dr. Liew:** H.A. formula has reduced cow's milk protein, which has been partially hydrolysed. This reduced the amount of protein presenting to the baby's immune system, and has been shown to effectively reduce the incidence of eczema in babies born to high risk families.

**LWB:** Can parents themselves initiate switching to a H.A. formula without a doctor's recommendation?

**Dr. Liew:** Parents can initiate a switch to H.A. formula on their own.

**LWB:** Are there special cases where a child should be put on H.A. formula even though there are no signs/symptoms of allergies?

**Dr. Liew:** H.A. formulas are used for primary prevention of atopy (eczema) in babies born to atopic families. Babies do not need to have any symptoms of allergy at this point.



**LWB:** How long should I put my child on H.A. formula?

**Dr. Liew:** Babies can continue on H.A. formulas indefinitely.

**LWB:** Can I switch my child back to regular formula once the signs & symptoms are no longer appearing?

**Dr. Liew:** A child may switch to normal formulas if there are no signs of cow's milk protein allergy. This can be done after the first year of age. **LWB**

