



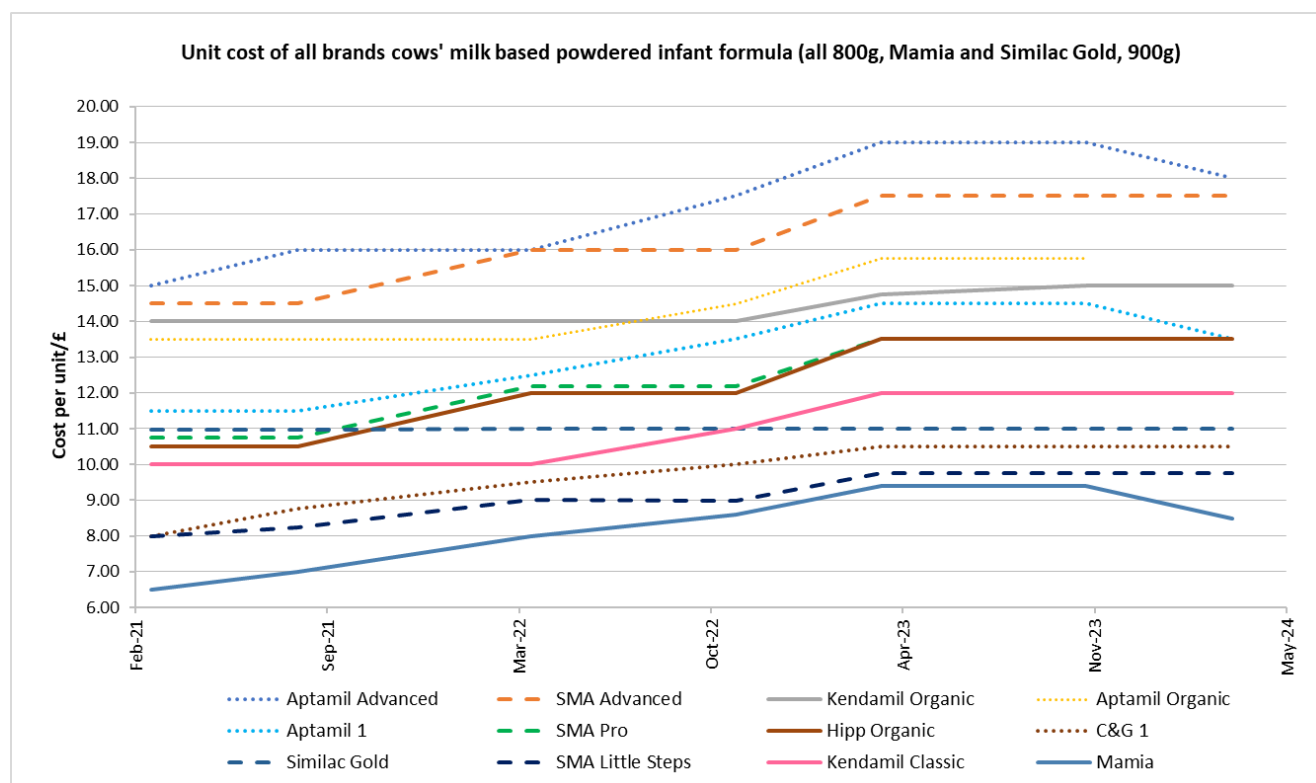
# **Cost of powdered infant formulas in the UK: How have they changed since January 2021?**

**April 2024**

## Cost of infant milks in the UK: How have they changed since January 2021?

Our routine price monitoring shows that the cost of infant formula had begun to rise comparatively rapidly after February 2021, preceding general food price rises. Graph 1 shows that between March 2021 and April 2023 the unit price of all powdered cows' milk-based first infant formulas on the UK market rose by an average of 22%. Since April 2023 prices rises have slowed. There was an average rise of just 0.1% in the cost of powdered infant formula between April 2023 and November 2023, due to a rise in price of one product: Kendamil Organic. Since then, due to static prices of the majority of products, and a small fall in the price of Aldi's Mamia, and Danone's Aptamil and Aptamil Advanced products, the unit price of powdered cow's milk-based first infant formula reduced by an average of 1.8%.

**Graph 1.** Unit cost of all brands cows' milk based powdered infant formula

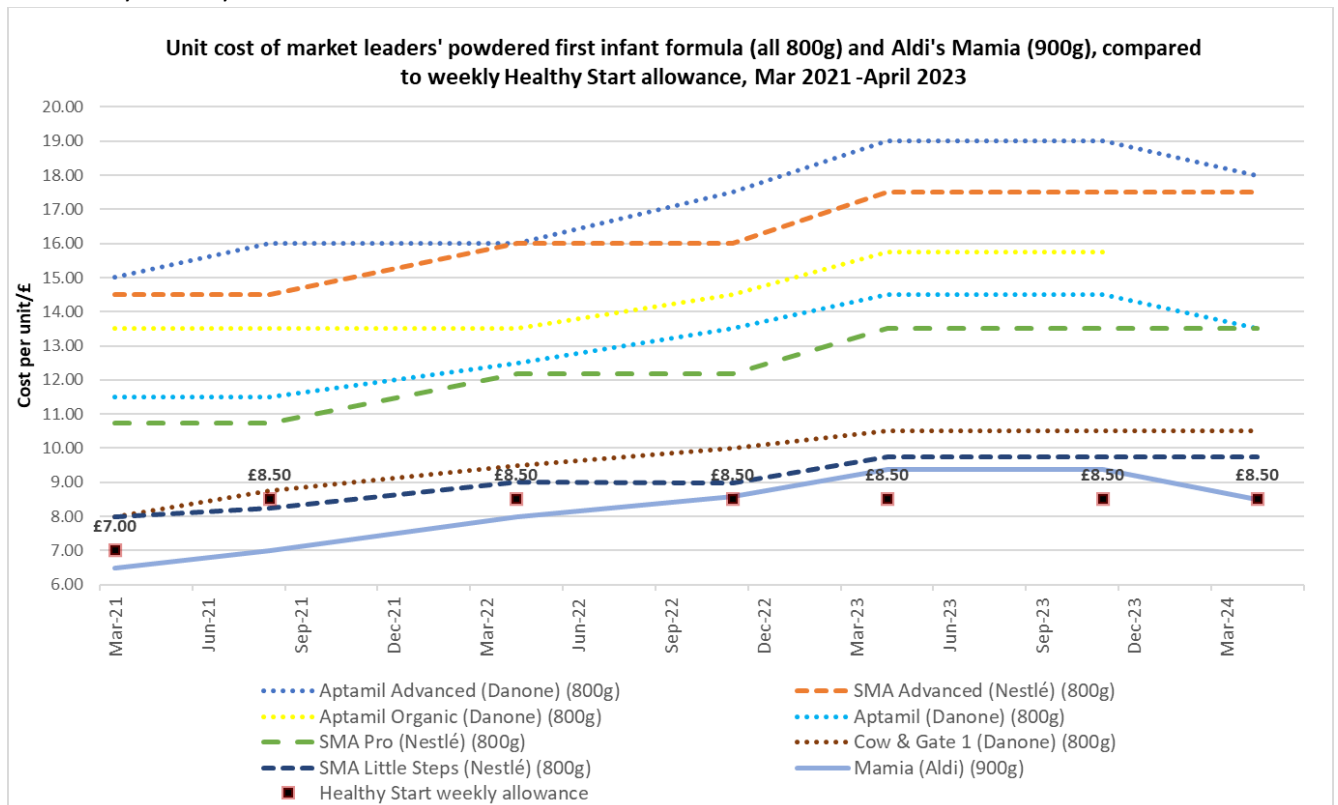


Graph 2 shows the change in unit price of the top three selling brands of powdered first infant formula as well as the least expensive but less widely available Aldi Mamia infant formula between March 2021 and April 2024. It shows that the most widely available and purchased infant formulas increased in price by between 17% (Aptamil Organic) and 31% (Cow & Gate) and Aldi's Mamia increased by 45% between March 2021 and April 2023. Prices remained stable between April 2023 and November 2024 and since November 2023, have reduced by an average of 3.1%.

It also shows that since November 2023 the price differentials between different brand's 'standard' and 'premium' products are decreasing; there is now no difference in price between Aptamil (800g) and SMA Pro (800g) and a difference of 2.8% between Aptamil Advanced (800g) SMA Advanced (800g).

A single 900g pack of Mamia infant formula is once again affordable with the Healthy Start allowance of £8.50/week (£34/month), but no other branded products cost <£8.50/unit

**Graph 2.** Unit cost of market leaders powdered first infant formula and Aldi's Mamia compared to the weekly Healthy Start allowance.



### **What does this mean for the cost of feeding an infant?**

All infant formula must meet regulations on nutrition composition. But while the average cost per 800g/tin of the six leading brand products is currently £13.79, the range is £9.75 to £18.00. When comparing costs to find the least expensive product to feed an infant, it is important to compare the cost of products on the basis of reconstituted formula as pack sizes and the ratio of powder to water required differs between brands. Using this data, the monthly cost of feeding a 10-week-old baby infant formula using the six leading brand powdered infant formula products is between £44.10 and £82.80. This compares to a cost of £33/month for Aldi Mamia, the only own-brand product. The Healthy Start allowance provides the equivalent of £34/month.

This report shows cost trends over time and so includes products that have been consistently marketed over the time frame included. Some manufacturers have responded to the cost-of-living crisis by adding different pack sizes of existing products that offer better value for money whilst some products are offered at a lower price by different retailers. As there is yet no historical aspect to these initiatives, they are not captured in this report, but are included in this accompanying report: *“Costs of infant formula, follow-on formula and milks marketed as foods for special medical purposes available over the counter in the UK”*.

The impact of the rising costs of infant formula for young families is explored in greater detail in our briefing note [‘What the Cost of Living Crisis means for the diets of infants and young children and recommended actions’](#).