

Wyeth

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Products include:

FORMULA:

S-26, S-26 Gold, S-26 Promil, S-26 Promil Gold, S-26 HA, SMA, SMA 1, SMA White, SMA Gold, SMA Wysoy, Infasoy, Promil, Promil Gold, Progress, Progress Gold. Store Brands: Baby basics, CVS, Home Best, Healthy Baby, Kozy Kids, Hill Country Fare, HEB, Little Ones, Parent's Choice, Safeway Select, Walgreen's.

Logos & Icons:

Wyeth promotion in Asia and South Africa uses cartoon carrots, wearing baby booties and gloves, and cropping up in advertisements, printed materials, on clocks and signboards. The carrots seem to have taken over from Wyeth's cartoon babies which used to dominate advertisements.



Wyeth started as a small drugstore around 1860 in Philadelphia, USA. As Wyeth Laboratories, it later became the first to 'advance manufacture' frequently prescribed medicines in bulk. In 1931, American Home Products (AHP) bought the rights to Wyeth, which had been bequeathed to Harvard University.

SMA is said to be the first commercial 'infant formula', produced in 1921. By 1933, Wyeth introduced Beta-carotene in formula (brand designers returned to the carrot-image in the next century) In 1961, the company launched its whey-dominant infant formula, S-26, claiming it was close to breastmilk. Promil started in 1981, as the first 'follow-up milk' (6 months – 1 year) in North America. It was followed by Progress (1 year to 4 years) in 1993.

While S-26 was doing well in export markets, competition was tough in the US where Mead-Johnson and Abbott Ross control 86% of the national market. To undercut the two giants, Wyeth went into "store brands". These are formulas produced for large supermarket chains who apply their own label and sell the formula for up to 40% less than the established Enfamil and Similac brands.

Wyeth produces and markets formulas in more than 100 countries. Its subsidiary in the UK was renamed SMA Nutrition, mixing company and brand names. All of Wyeth's major brands: SMA, S-26, Promil and Progress tout a "Gold" line with claims that added fatty acids promote brain development, immunity and growth. They also use the catch phrase: "Never so close to breastmilk".

Like most of the other large companies, Wyeth has cashed in on the presumed benefits of adding LCPUFAs (long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids) to its formulas. A prominent feature of its promotion are pictures of babies (and carrots) wearing a mortarboard, signifying intelligence and academic excellence following intake of DHA and AA, the fatty acids Wyeth has added to its formulas. Recent studies have shown that these claims are bogus and Mead Johnson has already been forced to withdraw them in Canada.

In August 2001, Wyeth recalled SMA Gold and White formulas in the UK after a severe case of infant botulism was linked to contaminated SMA Gold. While the recall was widely publicized in the UK and Ireland, the same batch of formula had also been distributed in Sri Lanka, Thailand, Ghana and Nigeria and it is not clear whether the public in those countries was alerted. Then, in December 2002, Wyeth recalled 1 million tins of both milk and soy-based formulas expiring in 2005, after FDA found *Enterobacter Sakazakii* in samples it tested. Another 500,000 tins of the same batch (all destined for US store brands) had not yet left the factory in Vermont, USA.

In July 2003, SMA Nutrition, the UK subsidiary of Wyeth, was found guilty by the Birmingham Magistrates Court on six separate counts of illegal advertising and ordered to pay £60,000 in fines and costs. In arriving at a guilty verdict on all six summonses, the judge said that the company has deliberately "crossed the line" in an effort to advertise directly to a vulnerable section of society. The initial charges were brought by the Trading Standards Department of Birmingham City following complaints by mothers who felt that SMA's advertising broke the UK Law as well as the International Code.

Promotion to the public

► **Article 5.1 of the Code prohibits advertising and all other forms of promotion of products under the scope of the Code.**

- In Argentina, Wyeth advertises S-26 via the radio.
- In Botswana, store flyers advertising discounts for S-26 are put into newspapers and distributed as junk mail.
- Posters, shelf-talkers and leaflets promote Wyeth products in shops in China. The “Wyeth Golden Star” is a contest for babies who have been fed S-26 for more than 6 months.



- In China, company reps visit shops to promote S-26.
- Baby nappies, napkins, toy bricks and picture books are given with purchases of S-26 in China.
- In China, Wyeth mails promotional materials and newsletters to mothers. A Chinese leaflet promotes S-26 with the slogan “Wyeth baby, great future” and shows a picture of a baby.►



- Discounts on products are advertised in a Hong Kong newspaper.►



- A Promil Gold leaflet in Hong Kong offers a free gift with every purchase and includes a portion to sign up for membership with Wyeth’s baby club to receive further promotions.◀

- Wyeth runs advertisements on Chinese TV showing a young girl putting S-26 in her mother’s shopping cart, with the commentary “the reason why a bright 4-year old girl can speak 4 foreign languages,... (is that she) drinks S-26 for 3 years and 9 months”.►



- An advertisement for Promil Gold in the Motherhood magazine in Singapore shows a baby correctly fitting shapes into their corresponding holes, and claims the product is “Enriched with preformed AA, DHA, natural carotenoids, nucleotides & selenium that help mental and physical development”. Wyeth idealises the formula by saying “your dream of a future scientist in the family may not be just a dream”.

- An advertisement in Singapore’s Motherhood magazine “Win! Wyeth Promil Gold and Progress Gold milk powder worth \$1190.40” asks mothers to submit coupons to be among 48 readers to win a tin of each product.►



- Special displays in Indonesian shops promote S-26 and S-26 Gold. Sales reps encourage mothers to try S-26 or S-26 Gold by claiming their added DHA & AA content makes the products similar to breastmilk. Mothers can give their address to receive more ‘information’ materials.

- A Mexican website promotes SMA Gold and Promil Gold. It advises that breastfeeding or formula feeding provide all that baby needs in the first months of life (equating their formula to breastfeeding).

- In Mexico, promotional trays for SMA Gold, Promil Gold and Progress Gold bears the slogan “Feeding the hopes of the future”. SMA Gold infant formula is represented merely by the word “Gold” following Wyeth’s narrow interpretation that the Code applies only to infant formula.►





- S-26 Gold is displayed in pharmacy shop windows with price discount offers in Uruguay. ◀



- In the UK, shelf-talkers announce discounted prices offered for SMA Gold and SMA Progress. ▶

- In Peru, Wyeth gives discounts to customers who purchase S-26 infant formula.



- In Mexico, Wyeth distributes leaflets to mothers in shops, promoting SMA Gold as “Closer to mother’s milk” and “the most natural after mother’s milk” recommended “when your baby is 6 months old. Congratulations!” ◀

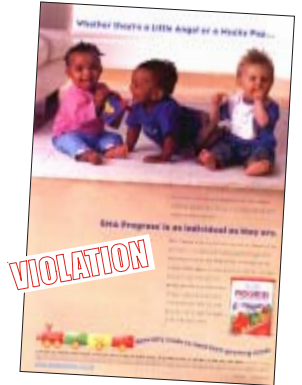


- A supermarket flyer in Hong Kong advertises Promil Gold with a \$5 discount if purchased together with Huggies diapers. ▶
- Wyeth holds special sales for its S-26, S-26 Promil and S-26 Promil Gold in Thai department stores.

- A large South African advertisement announces new packaging of 6 brands of Wyeth baby foods by showing a child reading a Wyeth newspaper: “HOT NEWS! Wyeth Nutritionals’ babies just got a face-lift”. A packshot panel displayed next to it claims that the products “help ensure growth, promote health and aid physical, mental and emotional development and well-being”. Leaflets in a dietitian’s office use the same picture. ▶



- An advertisement in the UK magazine *Baby & You* shows three cute babies of different races and the phrase “SMA Progress is as individual as they are” and makes the claim “SMA Progress is the only one with the optimum balance of iron and Vitamin C”. ▶



Promotion in health facilities, supplies and promotion to health workers

- ▶ Article 6.2 bans the promotion of products within the health care system.

- ▶ Article 6.3 prohibits the display of products, placards and posters or the distribution of company materials unless requested or approved by government.

- S-26 key chains given to health workers in Argentina come with fridge magnets proclaiming “Look how easy and fast you can prepare S-26 Gold” and show a mother bottle-feeding an infant. The magnet is put up for display in the health facility. ▲



- In Argentina, Wyeth donated baby scale covers with a drawing of Wyeth’s cartoon baby, as well as cot covers with a big S-26 logo in the middle. ▼



Baby scale cover



Cot cover

- S-26 promotional materials are displayed in maternity wards and on notice boards and shelves in health facilities in China. ▶



Stickers



Leaflets

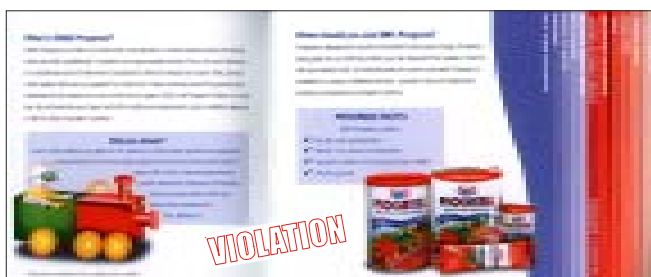


- A bookmark found in a Hong Kong health facility shows a packshot of **S-26** and a baby wearing a graduation cap. ◀
- Health workers in Indonesia give samples of **Promil** follow-up formula to breastfeeding mothers even though their babies are only 3 months old.

- Posters advertising a range of Wyeth products are displayed in South African health facilities.
- Wyeth posters, booklets on baby care, immunisation cards and other materials can be found in health facilities in Malaysia.
- Wyeth distributes note and prescription pads with mixing instructions for **S-26** to health workers in Trinidad and Tobago. ▼▶



- In China, Wyeth donates display shelves and calendars with the **S-26** brand and the company logo to health facilities.
- A table toilet paper dispenser in a Thai health facility is made to resemble a can of **S-26**. ▶
- In Thailand, company reps visit mothers in health facilities to gather addresses and to recommend the use of their products.
- Company reps visit mothers at health facilities in Thailand to distribute samples of **S-26**.
- UK health facilities display booklets promoting **SMA Progress**. ▼



- Company reps give out product brochures to mothers at Thai health facilities. Sometimes, gift packs containing a tin of **S-26** and brochures are given.



- The company distributes calendars and stationery with the company name and logo or the **S-26** brand name or both to health workers in Thailand.
- In Peru health workers receive **S-26** calendars and notepads with the **Promil** brand name.
- In South Africa, Wyeth distributed the “*Wyeth Nutritionals Reassurance Beyond Nutrition*” folder to participants at the Sensitive Midwifery Symposium. The inside cover has an advertisement for a wide range of Wyeth infant formula products.



- In Uruguay, Wyeth gives health workers prescription pads with pictures of a mother and her baby, of **S-26 Gold** and a baby holding a tin of **S-26 Gold**. ◀
- In the UAE, Wyeth gives watches with the company logo to health workers.
- In Colombia, health facilities get a discount on **S-26** formula when ordered together with other products.
- Health workers in the Dominican Republic and Peru give free samples of **S-26 Gold** and **SMA** to mothers.
- Wyeth donates cot tags, posters and other items with their name and logo to health facilities in Peru; other items are displayed in obstetric stations and paediatric emergency areas.

- In Uruguay, an **S-26 Gold** advertisement in a scientific journal claims the product “contains long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, the same as breastmilk”.



- Clocks and other items with the Wyeth logo and brand names are displayed on nurses counters, in paediatricians’ offices, waiting rooms and maternity wards in Thailand.



► **WHA Resolution 47.5 (1994) urges an end to free or subsidised donations of products to all parts of the health care system.**

- Wyeth regularly donates unsolicited supplies of **S-26**, **S-26 Gold** and **Promil Gold** to health facilities in Thailand. The company takes turns with other milk companies to provide free supplies to health facilities. ◀
- In Indonesia, Wyeth sometimes invoices health facilities for supplies of **S-26**, but does not collect payment. Wyeth also gives unsolicited free supplies of **S-26** to health facilities. In one hospital first class patients receive a gift pack which includes a sample of **S-26** infant formula. Some health facilities receive supplies of **S-26** at discounted prices.
- In the Dominican Republic, Wyeth donates unsolicited supplies of **SMA** to health facilities.
- Many health facilities receive unsolicited free supplies of **S-26** and **S-26 Gold** from Wyeth in Peru.

Labelling

► **Article 9 of the Code requires labels to NOT discourage breastfeeding and to inform about the correct use of the product, the risk of misuse and abide by a number of other points.**

- **SMA Gold** labels in Kenya are in English only and say “*Now even closer to breast-milk*”. ►
- **S-26** and **SMA White** labels in Kenya are in English only. The latter say “*More satisfying for hungrier babies*” implying breastmilk is insufficient. The same message appears on labels in the Gambia.
- **SMA-Wysoy’s** label in Kenya shows a picture of a feeding bottle and teat.
- In Malawi, labels of **SMA** are not written in the national language and omit the statement that the product should only be used on the advice of a health worker.
- The label of **S-26** in Indonesia claims that it contains important nutrients vital for optimal growth and development, but does not mention the benefits of breastfeeding nor the need to consult a health worker.



- A range of Wyeth Nutritionals products in South Africa including **S-26 1**, **S-26 Gold**, **S-26 Promil**, **SMA 1** and **Infasoy 1** carry statements like “*Breastfeeding for babies is best from birth to 6 months*” or “*Breastfeeding for babies is best from 6-12*” which may confuse mothers and others.
- In Mexico, a free sample of Wyeth’s **Promil Gold** has an insert under the lid showing a baby and slogans like - “*Now the future of your baby can be as brilliant as gold*” and “*For babies that devour the world*”. ►



- Labels of **S-26** in Tanzania claim it is “*closer to human milk in its nutritional values when compared to other formulas...*” and contain confusing age recommendations. ◀
- In Tanzania, the **SMA Gold** label states that it is “*...even closer to breastmilk*”, claims that “*...the balance of milk proteins are similar to that found in breastmilk*” and advertises other SMA products.

Misleading text and pictures which violate the Code

- **Article 4.2** requires all information material to advocate for breastfeeding and not contain pictures or text which idealises the use of breastmilk substitutes.
- **For health professionals, Article 7.2 of the Code** only allows product information which is factual and scientific.

- An advertisement in “Community Practitioner” in the UK shows packshots of **SMA Gold** and **SMA White** against a backdrop of a pool of milk with drops of ‘nucleotide’ falling into it. The accompanying text reads “*always looking for ways to bring our infant formula closer to breastmilk*”.





● In Singapore, a leaflet entitled “Promil Gold - 7 IQ points advantage” promotes the IQ advantage of the product over other foods and milks. It claims to be Singapore’s first follow-on formula fortified with both AA & DHA. ◀

● The Wyeth Golden Baby, high achievement in the future leaflet given out at the International Baby/Children Products Expo in Hong Kong claims Promil Gold contributes to a child’s intelligence. It urges mothers to change to Promil Gold at 6 months to “supplement nutritional deficiencies of older infants” after weaning. ▼

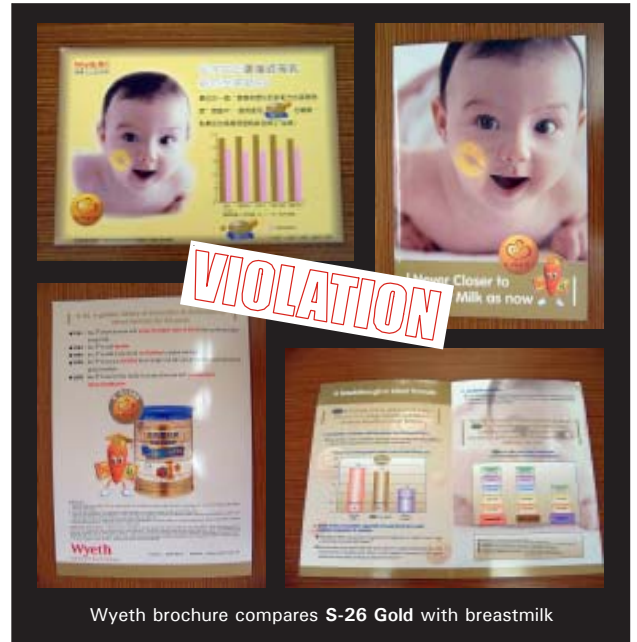


- A leaflet in Hong Kong claims “breakthrough in infant formula”, showing a graph comparing breastmilk, S-26 and one Brand A+. S-26 appears most similar to breastmilk.
- Another S-26 Manual for health professionals in the Dominican Republic claims that “S-26 for premature babies has a higher nutritional concentration than ordinary formulas or mature breastmilk” and is “just like human milk and contains whey-predominant protein” with “LCPUFA levels similar to breastmilk”.
- The My baby book in the Dominican Republic says “Your doctor recommends a Wyeth formula (S-26 or SMA). Wyeth provides essential nutrients closest to those of mother’s milk”.



● In Hong Kong, the leaflet How to prevent allergies to milk protein for your baby promotes S-26 HA “as preventing genetic allergic reaction to milk protein” and “nearer in resemblance to breastmilk”. ◀

● Brochures promote S-26 Gold in health facilities in Hong Kong with the slogan “Never closer to breastmilk as now” and a baby’s face with a ‘golden kiss’ on its cheek. ▼



Wyeth brochure compares S-26 Gold with breastmilk

● The same baby picture is found on fans given to health workers, bearing the “Alpha” protein logos identified with S-26 Gold. ▶



- The Handbook for complete development in all directions from birth - 6 months was distributed at the Thai Perinatal Society Conference. It contains claims that formula with added carotene, Omega 9 and other nutrients will promote immunity levels and brain development similar to that of a breastfed baby.
- A pamphlet in China promotes Promil Gold and Progress Gold with a picture of a graduate carrot with blocks of DHA and AA. Infant formula is indirectly promoted by the figure “1”. ▼



- In Thailand, the S-26 range leaflets given to health workers bear claims that the products have “complete nutrients closest to breastmilk” or have “biofactors for 3-dimensional development” and “the best complete thing that a mother could give her baby” .
- The brochure *The best start, start here* in Thailand promotes Wyeth’s S-26 Gold and S-26 Promil Gold with DHA & AA content levels closest to breastmilk.



Wyeth brochures and leaflets in Thailand use the intelligence theme to idealise its (DHA-AA enriched) products.

- In the UK, the *Taking Good Care of Mums and Babies* leaflet draws a similarity with breastfeeding by saying “giving your bottle fed baby a milk that’s closest to breastmilk is just one way to get a good start in life – so at SMA Nutrition we give you more”. ▼



- A leaflet in Peru given to mothers during their visit to health facilities contains information on the stages of the baby’s growth and says “S-26 closest to mother’s milk”.
- In Trinidad and Tobago, pregnant women who come for a check-up are given a packet with a booklet of helpful tips for parents-to-be. The envelope and introductory letter show packshots of SMA’s range of formulas.
- A metro station billboard in Hong Kong promotes **Promil Gold** with the slogan “Wyeth with the best nutrition, in exchange for the best development”. The ad prompted protests by breastfeeding advocates. It has since been removed. ▼

