

[What Czech Children Have Been Drinking: Toxin Found in Baby Formula in Belgium; Results Are Alarming](#)

Denisa's one-year-old daughter drank 42 cartons of milk from recalled batches over the past year. Their children drank dozens of cartons of infant formula that the manufacturer subsequently recalled due to possible contamination with the toxin cereulide. Neither the authorities nor the manufacturer told the parents how much of the toxin might have been present. Seznam Zprávy therefore had the milk tested.

"Here they are. Forty-two cans of infant formula. That's how many my daughter managed to drink before the manufacturer recalled the milk from the market," Denisa says, pointing to a bag full of empty containers of Nestlé's Alfamino powdered milk. Next to the bag are another ten unopened cans. All come from batches that the manufacturer withdrew from sale on January 5, 2026. Officially, this was a precautionary measure due to the possible presence of the bacterium *Bacillus cereus*. At the time, Nestlé made no mention of the toxin cereulide, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea. The company's Czech branch states today that it recalled the milk without undue delay based on the results of testing the raw materials.

"Nestlé was the first company to identify the problem and immediately began taking proactive steps to ensure that potentially affected products were withdrawn from the market as quickly as possible," said Petr Šašek, spokesperson for Nestlé Czech Republic.

The Seznam Zprávy editorial team had the milk independently tested. The toxin cereulide was confirmed in all samples. Three of them contained such high concentrations that they exceeded current safety recommendations for infants by several times. The results took experts by surprise.

The grandmother of the now one-year-old girl stands nearby, her head in her hands, watching as Denisa stacks one can next to another in the garden in eastern Bohemia. "What if my granddaughter had health problems because of that milk? How is it even possible that something like this could happen?" she shakes her head. The family does not wish to disclose their last name.

Since the beginning of the global scandal, which has so far affected 99 countries worldwide (see box below), Seznam Zprávy has been following the stories of three families whose children were given the same milk—Alfamino from the recalled batches—for several months. This is a specialized formula for sick children from birth, available exclusively in pharmacies.

The families described to the editorial staff the health problems they observed in their children while they were consuming the milk: vomiting, diarrhea, and in one case, blood in the stool. However, it was not possible to retroactively prove a direct link to a specific product. There is no laboratory in the Czech Republic capable of analyzing the toxin cereulide from biological samples.

For months, the families tried in vain to determine whether and to what extent the milk was contaminated—and whether the children might suffer lasting consequences. Czech authorities refused to conduct testing: the milk had already been recalled and declared unsafe, so such tests were pointless in their view; moreover, the state laboratory's capacity is limited. The manufacturer did not provide an answer either.

Meanwhile, families learned from the media about other products in which the domestic food inspection authority had detected the toxin. Concerns grew.

Seznam Zprávy has now discovered that the actual scope of the scandal is greater than previously known. Manufacturers distributed approximately 650,000 packages of milk to the Czech Republic, but only a portion—roughly 132,000—was recalled. This is according to data from the State Agricultural and Food Inspection Authority.

Authorities do not know how much of the milk children in the Czech Republic may have consumed. Some of the problematic batches had been on the market for nearly a year before manufacturers withdrew them from sale this year. The State Veterinary Administration later classified all the recalled milk as dangerous due to the presence of the toxin. However, authorities did not disclose how much toxin it contained.

Toxin in all samples

Neither the authorities nor the manufacturer were able to determine the extent of any contamination, nor could the Seznam Zprávy editorial team. Therefore, it had four unopened packages of Alfamino milk from two recalled batches—provided by the families mentioned—tested at the prestigious Belgian laboratory Sciensano. This laboratory also serves as the federal scientific institute for public health and food safety. The editorial team first requested testing from the State Agricultural and Food Inspection Authority. This is the only laboratory in the Czech Republic that analyzes cereulide in infant formula. However, the Inspection Authority refused the request, stating that it does not conduct tests for private entities.

The results from the Belgian laboratory Sciensano arrived in early June 2026 and were unequivocal: the toxin cereulide was confirmed in all four samples. Three samples from a single batch contained 4.73 to 4.77 micrograms per kilogram ($\mu\text{g}/\text{kg}$) of infant formula. At the recommended dosage, this represents approximately a ninefold exceedance of the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) reference value for infants. The European authority considers exceeding this value a potential health risk. These levels are among the highest publicly known concentrations of cereulide in recalled infant formula in Europe.

“From a public health perspective, this result must be considered significant, particularly given the target consumer group—infants and young children, who often have specific health needs and thus constitute a particularly vulnerable population group,” noted n

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