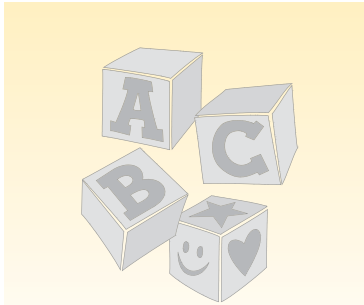


Feeding Your Baby



“Getting my son to eat new foods isn’t easy. I’ve discovered that if I serve small amounts of the new food over and over, he’ll eventually try it.”

—Kaiser Permanente Member

Tips to remember

Feeding time is a time for your baby to learn and practice. Be patient and pay attention to your baby’s needs and remember to always watch your baby closely when he or she is eating.

Here are some other tips to keep in mind:

1. Breast milk is the best food for your baby and is all the nutrition your baby will need for the first six months of life.
2. Do not give your baby honey in the first year of life. Honey can make your baby sick.
3. Do not force your baby to eat or finish a bottle. Your baby is the best judge of how much to eat. Each baby is different and the amount your baby needs changes from day to day.
4. When your baby is 4 to 6 months old, you can start to feed your baby solid foods.
5. To avoid wasting food, place only a small amount of food at a time on your baby’s plate.
 - Feed your baby with a baby spoon or small spoon.
 - Do not feed your baby from the jar. Your baby’s saliva can spoil the food.
 - Throw away any leftover food from the bottle or dish.
 - Tightly seal all leftover baby food that comes from a jar. Store it in the refrigerator for no longer than two days.
6. Avoid tooth decay: Do not put juice, sweetened drinks, or soda in your baby’s bottle. Also, never put your baby to bed with a bottle. It can cause tooth decay, as well.
7. Some foods may cause allergies. Add one new food at a time. Wait about five days before giving the next new food. This gives your baby time to adjust to each new food and makes it easier to tell which food may have caused a reaction. Foods that may cause allergies include: cow’s milk, orange juice, egg whites, wheat products, corn products, fish, seafood, soy products, peanuts, other nuts, citrus fruits, strawberries, and tomatoes.
8. Signs that your baby may be allergic to a food:
 - diarrhea
 - vomiting
 - breathing problems
 - gas
 - skin rash or hives
9. Buy plain, one-item foods and avoid combination dinners. Making your own meat and vegetable combinations at home will save money and is healthier.
10. Offer your baby plain fruit for dessert. Babies do not need baby desserts, such as puddings, custards, and cobblers.
11. Warning: Babies easily choke. Avoid foods that may cause choking, such as:
 - whole hot dogs
 - nuts
 - chunks of meat
 - cheese
 - peanut butter
 - whole grapes
 - hard or sticky candy
 - popcorn
 - raw vegetables

Food for your baby's first year: This guide lists the foods that your baby is ready to eat at each age.

BIRTH TO 4 MONTHS

Breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula. (Breast milk is best for your baby.)

Do *not* give:

- cow's milk
- soy milk
- goat's milk (until your baby is one year old)

Feed your baby on demand.

Always hold your baby when giving a bottle.

A breast milk/formula feeding can be from 3 to 7 ounces (oz.).

4 TO 6 MONTHS

Continue breastfeeding and / or formula.
Start baby cereal (iron-fortified).

First try:

- rice cereal
- then oatmeal (mix with breast milk or formula)

Feed your baby cereal from a spoon.
Do not put cereal in your baby's bottle.

A meal of solid foods can be from 1 to 2 tablespoons (tbsp.).

6 TO 8 MONTHS

Continue breastfeeding and / or formula.
Start strained or pureed vegetables.

Next, offer strained or pureed fruits.

Later offer:

- strained or pureed meats (start with lamb, then poultry and then beef)
- cottage cheese
- plain yogurt
- cooked egg white
- tofu

Encourage your baby to drink from a cup.
Limit juice to 2 to 4 oz. a day.

Offer your baby plain foods without added salt, sugar, or spice.

Let your baby start to feed him/herself.

A meal of solid foods can be from 4 to 7 tbsp.

8 TO 10 MONTHS

Continue breastfeeding and / or formula.

Start mixed-grain baby cereal, cooked plain rice, noodles, vegetables, fruits, and cheese.

Try finger foods like:

- chunks of cheese
- toast squares
- soft tortilla
- low-sugar cereal
- cooked vegetables
- soft fruit
- pieces of cooked chicken, fish, or tofu

Feed your baby solid foods first at each meal before giving breast milk or formula.

Offer your baby new fruits and vegetables so your baby will enjoy a variety of foods.

A meal of solid foods can be from 5 to 8 tbsp.

10 TO 12 MONTHS

Continue breastfeeding and / or formula.

Start offering mashed or chopped foods from the family table such as:

- breads
- fruits
- cooked vegetables
- cooked soft meats
- beans
- egg white

Let your baby sit at the family table and use a spoon or hands to feed him/herself.

Slowly reduce the number of feedings from breast or bottle as your baby eats more food and drinks using a cup.

A meal of solid foods can be from 6 to 12 tbsp.

ONE YEAR

Continue breastfeeding.

Stop giving your baby formula. Replace with whole milk or full fat soy.

Offer cooked whole egg.

Limit juice to no more than 4 to 6 oz. a day. Mix fruit juice with equal parts of water.

Give your baby 3 to 4 small meals a day plus snacks.

Serve your baby drinks only in a cup.
Offer 4 ounces of whole milk in a cup, 4 times a day.

A meal of solid foods can be from 8 to 16 tbsp.

The information presented here is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of the information or medical care you receive from your child's medical professional. If your child has persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult your child's physician or other medical professional.

Adapted from "The First Twelve Months: A guide to infant feeding." WIC Supplemental Nutrition Branch, California Department of Health Services.

© 2002, The Permanente Medical Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Regional Health Education.
96440 (REV. 8-02), RL 4.6

Suggested reading



Guide to Your Child's Nutrition—
American Academy of Pediatrics



The Everything Baby's First Foods Book: Nutritious Meals and Snacks...—Tarlov et al.