

A Feeding Guide for Healthy Babies

Adapted from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National WIC Association

When can my baby start eating solid foods?

When your baby is around six months old and can do ALL of these things:

- Sit up with some help
- Push up with straight elbows from lying face down
- Can hold his or her head steady
- Puts her fingers or toys in her mouth
- When you try feeding him baby food, he can close his lips around the spoon and swallow food



Why wait? Feeding babies solid foods too early can cause choking and obesity, and has been linked to illnesses such as food allergies, asthma, eczema, and diabetes.

Allergies and food reactions: Add one new food at a time. After your baby tries a new food, watch and wait a few days for any reaction such as rash, diarrhea, vomiting, or breathing problems. If she has a reaction, stop feeding that food and tell her doctor.

Sitting With Some Help (around 6 months) Sit your baby in a highchair or on your lap. Put a little food on a baby spoon, and hold it near your baby's mouth. If she opens her mouth, gently put the spoon in her mouth. Always wait until she's done with each bite before you feed her more. If your baby cries or turns away when you offer her solid foods, do not force her to eat. Try again in a week.



New foods to try: At around 6 months your baby may be ready to eat smooth food that has been strained or pureed to a smooth or runny consistency. Offer:

- Iron-fortified baby cereal (rice or oatmeal)
- Pureed vegetables (carrots, squash, peas, green beans) and fruits (applesauce, bananas)
- Well-pureed meat (turkey, chicken)

Sitting Without Help (6 to 8 months) How much? It's important for your baby to enjoy mealtimes.



Start with just 1 or 2 teaspoons of food. When she is hungry, she will open her mouth and move her head toward the spoon or try to grab the spoon. When she is full, she will turn her head away or spit out the food. Never put baby food in a bottle! It can cause choking and overfeeding.

New foods to try: By around 7 or 8 months, your baby may be ready to try mashed foods in addition to what he is already eating. Use the back of a fork to mash foods well.

- Mashed soft-cooked vegetables, like sweet potatoes, broccoli, carrots
- Mashed mango, pears, peaches, cantaloupe

Crawling (8 to 10 months)



New foods to try: Chopped soft foods cut into small pieces.

- Chopped cooked egg yolk, chopped tofu, mashed beans (black, kidney, garbanzo)
- Plain yogurt mixed with fruit
- Chopped soft-cooked vegetables (carrots) and fruits like papaya

Learning to Walk (10 to 12 months)



New foods to try: Your baby may be ready to try small pieces of your family's foods. Some he may like: ground beef, pasta or noodles, and finger foods like dry cereal. Let him begin using the spoon with your help.

Breastfeeding Guide

- **Month 1:** Breastfeed 10-12 feedings per 24 hours, about every 1 ½ to 3 hours.
At about 2 weeks of age, if your baby weighs the same or more than his birth weight and is steadily gaining weight, you do not need to wake him at night to feed. During the day, do not let him go longer than 3 hours between feedings. Premature and jaundiced babies may sleep through their hunger, however, which means you must wake them to feed. Check with your health care provider to determine when you can start feeding on demand during the night.
- **Months 2, 3, and 4:** About 8-10 feedings per 24 hours
- **Months 5 and 6:** Breastfeed about 7-9 feedings in 24 hours
- **Months 6, 7, and 8:** Breastfeed about 4-6 feedings in 24 hours.
Introduce solid foods gradually. Breast milk is still priority over food.
- **Months 8 – 12:** Continue to breastfeed 4 or more feedings in 24 hours.



Bottle Feeding Guide

For formula or breast milk fed babies ages 0 – 12 months

Your baby will show you she is full by letting go of the nipple, closing her mouth, and turning away.

Your baby's bottle is for breast milk or formula only. Wait until 6 months to offer water to your baby in a cup, and wait until one year for juice



Age of Baby	Amount of breast milk or formula	Frequency of feeding
0 – 2 months	2 to 3 ounces	Every 1 ½ to 3 hours
2 – 3 months	About 4 ounces	Every 1 ½ to 3 hours
4 – 5 months	About 5 ounces	Every 2 ½ to 4 hours
6 – 8 months	5 to 8 ounces	Every 3 to 4 hours
8 – 12 months	6 to 8 ounces	About 4 times a day

What NOT to feed your baby:

- Cow's milk (your baby can't digest it yet – wait until he has turned 1 year old)
- Honey (it can cause serious illness)
- Foods that can cause choking, such as: hot dogs, nuts, seeds, popcorn, whole grapes, peanut butter, dried fruit, raw hard vegetables, candy
- Never put cereal or baby food in a bottle (It can cause choking or overfeeding)
- Babies don't need juice or other sweetened drinks. At one year old, offer juice in a cup
- Babies don't need additional water. At six months, offer water between meals in a cup

If you have a family history of allergies, there may be more foods you want to avoid.

Check with your baby's healthcare provider

IS YOUR BABY SICK?



Fever: Call your doctor if your baby's temperature reaches 99.5° F or higher when checked under the arm.

Or if 0 – 3 months: 100.4° F (rectal) 3 -6 months: 101° F (rectal) 6 – 12 months: 102° F (rectal)

Nasal Congestion: Clean your baby's nose with a bulb syringe. If the mucous in the nose is dry or very thick, place 1 to 3 drops of saline water in each nostril for 1 minute, then suction.

Recipe for saline drops: Mix ¼ teaspoon salt in 1 cup (8 ounces) of boiling water. Let it cool to room temperature before using. Discard drops after 24 hours.