

General Feeding Instructions

Infants vary widely in their growth patterns and it is not wise to compare one infant with another. Infant feeding is a very individual process and there is no right way, but rather a series of good steps to take.

An infant's nutritional needs are usually totally met by breast milk or by formula for the first four to six months of life. Some babies are more hungry than others. They will let you know if the milk is not satisfying them. Learn to look for clues from your baby that will tell you he/she needs a change in diet. If your baby is formula fed, do not change to whole milk until one year of age.

Hasty introduction of solids can trigger food allergies and might possibly lead to an obesity problem later on in life. In general, we introduce only one new food every 4 - 5 days so that if your baby has a problem you will know which food is the cause of the difficulty. Observe for a significant skin rash or gastrointestinal symptoms after the introduction of a new food.

When introducing a new food, give only small amounts. Do not be discouraged if your baby spits it back out or makes a funny face. Gently encourage your baby to eat the new food, but do not force the issue. Be sure to offer with a spoon and not an infant feeder.

Offer your baby nutritious foods. He/she will like the food without adding salt or sugar. Read closely the labels of the foods you purchase to be sure of the contents. Baby food is easy to prepare by placing the food in a blender. After 6 – 8 months of age, your baby may have mashed fruits and vegetables from the table.

Multi-vitamins with Iron may be added to the diet after one year of age for the child who is a picky eater.

Do not worry too much about how much or how little food your baby consumes on a day-to-day basis. Each baby will have a different volume need to satisfy him/her. Meals should be an enjoyable time for the whole family.

The suggestions on the following pages are intended as general guidelines and may not apply to all babies in all circumstances. Your nurse or pediatrician will be happy to furnish information about the special needs of your infant.

INFANT FEEDING GUIDELINES 4 TO 9 MONTHS

Breastmilk <u>OR</u> Infant formula with Iron		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Breastmilk is nutritionally adequate for the first 6 months. Feed/Nurse 6-8 times a day. ▶ 26-32 ounces a day of formula.
Iron-fortified Dry Infant Cereal	4 to 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Add formula or breastmilk to the cereal. ▶ Start with rice cereal as it is better tolerated. Later, other cereal like oat or barley may be added. ▶ Use single grain cereals before adding multigrain. ▶ Do not use sugar. A baby should never be given honey until 1 year of age.
	8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Introduce wheat cereal at this age to reduce chance of allergic reactions. ▶ Serve crackers, bread, noodles if is baby ready.
Vegetables	5 to 7 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use 1/4 to 1/2 of a 4 oz. jar of prepared, strained baby vegetables <u>OR</u> ▶ 2 to 4 Tbs. of plain pureed vegetables as a serving. ▶ Try carrots, squash, sweet potatoes, peas, or green beans. Later add greens. Avoid tomato until 9 months of age. ▶ Offer 1 new vegetable at a time, waiting at least 4-5 days before adding a new food.
Fruits	6 to 8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use 1/4 to 1/2 jar of strained baby fruits such as applesauce, pears, peaches, <u>OR</u> ▶ 2 to 4 Tbs. home mashed fresh fruits like banana as a serving. Avoid citrus until at least 9 months of age.
Meats and Protein Foods	7 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Add plain strained or pureed meats. Before adding meat dinners, make sure your baby has already tried & tolerated the other food ingredients. ▶ Avoid using bacon, lunch meats, or hot dogs. ▶ Whole egg & egg white not advised until 1 yr.
Juice	8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Juice should be offered in a cup, not a bottle. It may be reasonable to use juice in a bottle to help with constipation. Call us for advice. ▶ Use only 2 to 4 oz. a day. Too much juice increases loose stools and may affect appetite. ▶ Use single varieties of fruit juice before adding mixtures of juices baby has tried. Orange juice is not advised until 9 months.

- ▶ At each meal, take out of the jar only what you think your baby will eat. Do not feed directly from the food container. Throw away opened jars of baby food after 2 days.
- ▶ Breastmilk or formula is still providing most of your baby's nourishment during this stage.
- ▶ Use a spoon to introduce foods to your baby. "Infant feeder" should not be used.
- ▶ Cereals or other baby food should not be put into bottles.
- ▶ Do not urge your baby to eat too much. Let your baby's interest guide you.

INFANT FEEDING GUIDLINES 9 TO 12 MONTHS

Food	Suggested daily intake	Special Notes
Breastmilk <u>OR</u> Iron-fortified formula	24-36 ounces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Continue breastfeeding for as long as desired. ▶ Continue providing formula if baby is not breastfed-fed. Baby will probably not need more formula since more solids are being consumed.
Iron-fortified dry infant Cereal and breads	4-6 Tbs. before adding liquids 1-2 small serving of breads or pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Serve toasted bread which may be easier to chew. ▶ Serve enriched rice and pastas.
Vegetables	6-8 Tbs. of table vegetables <u>OR</u> A 4oz. jar of strained baby vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Serve plain cooked vegetables, mashed chopped.
Fruits	6-8 Tbs. of table fruits <u>OR</u> A 4 oz. jar of strained baby fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Peel & mash bananas, peaches, pears. ▶ Mash canned fruits in light syrup or own juice. ▶ Use plain applesauce.
Juice	4 oz. maximum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Juice should be offered in a cup, not a bottle. ▶ Use infant juices high in Vitamin C or fortified with Vitamin C. Don't use fruit drinks. ▶ Use single varieties of fruit juice before adding mixtures of juices baby has tried.
Meats and Protein Foods	4-6 tablespoons <u>OR</u> 1/2 to 3/4 of a 4 oz. jar of baby meats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Add plain strained or pureed meats. Before adding meat dinners, make sure baby has already tried & tolerated the other food ingredients. ▶ At 10 months, add finely chopped meats, chicken, and fish. ▶ Cooked dried beans may be served mashed. ▶ Avoid using bacon, lunch meats or hot dogs. ▶ Whole egg and egg white are not recommended until 1 year of age.
Finger Foods		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ At 9 months most babies should be able to feed themselves & can try some finger foods. Babies do not need teeth to begin finger foods. ▶ Some appropriate finger foods are: cooked noodles, small bits of bread, small bits of soft peeled fruit, cooked veggies, or small slices mild cheese.

***Avoid:** raw veggies, pieces of meat, fruit skins, hot dogs, raisins, popcorn, whole grapes.*

Points to Remember

4-9 Months

- ◇ Avoid putting your baby to bed with a bottle. It's bad for his/her teeth and can be a hard habit to break.
- ◇ Babies often begin teething around 6 months. Some hard, dry toast or teething biscuits may help. To help keep baby's teeth clean, wipe teeth and gums after feeding with a moist washcloth or gauze pad.
- ◇ Start slowly! Give a teaspoon or so of a new food and increase amount as your baby accepts it.
- ◇ Be patient. If your baby doesn't like a food at first, try again a few weeks later.
- ◇ Offer one new food at a time. Use it for 4-5 days before another new food is started.
- ◇ Formula powders and concentrates do not contain fluoride. If city water is used, your baby is getting enough fluoride. If you do not use city water, talk to us about fluoride supplementation.

9-12 Months

- ◇ Don't force your baby to eat. His/her appetite may vary.
- ◇ Now is the time to offer water, juices, formula, or breast milk in a cup, a little at a time to get your baby used to it.
- ◇ Candy, colas, jelly, and sweets are too sugary for a baby at this age. We recommend to avoid them.
- ◇ Feeding at this age is a messy time. Try putting newspapers under the baby's feeding chair.
- ◇ Wean your child from a bottle around 12 months of age. It is easier not to "trick" a baby into taking cow's milk from a bottle, but rather offer whole milk in a cup while withdrawing bottles gradually.
- ◇ Do not be discouraged if your baby refuses whole milk at first. The calories will be made up by additional solids. **YOUR BABY WILL NOT DEHYDRATE OR "STARVE."** Changes are not always easily accepted and your baby may resist. It is not necessary for him/her to take as much whole milk as formula, anyway.
- ◇ Babies who continue to take the bottle beyond the first year can develop ear infections, tooth decay, constipation, and excess weight gain.
- ◇ Now that your baby is eating foods like the rest of the family, remember to offer a wide variety of healthy foods.