

# Feeding Your Baby - The First Year

Nutrition during the first year of your baby's life is important for proper growth and health. Babies are also developing oral and motor skills, so it is necessary to feed an infant based on his or her feeding skills and developmental age. Here are some suggestions to help you feed your baby.

## **How often should I feed my baby?**

Babies know when they are hungry or full. Feed your baby every time he or she is hungry. An infant who only drinks breast milk or formula should be fed **six to 10** times a day. As your baby starts eating solid foods, he or she will drink less. Slowly increase the amount of solid food you offer and decrease the amount of breast milk or formula.

## **How do I know when my baby is hungry or full?**

Some general signs that your baby is hungry include:

- Fussing or crying
- Grabbing for or leaning toward breast or bottle; pointing at spoon, food or feeder's hand

Some signs your baby has had enough to eat include:

- Pulling away from bottle, spoon, or breast
- Falling asleep
- Changing position, shaking head, keeping mouth closed tightly, moving hands actively
- Handing food back to the feeder

## **How do I know when my baby is ready for solid food?**

Generally, babies are ready to start solid foods between four and six months. However, every baby develops at a different rate, so here are some signs to look for to know your baby is developmentally ready:

- Baby can sit upright with little support.
- Baby is hungry for more after eight to 10 breastfeedings or 32 ounces of formula.
- Baby shows interest in what you are eating.
- Baby can move food from the front to the back of his or her mouth.

## What foods do I feed my baby and when?

The following chart gives guidelines for feeding your baby. It is important to match what you feed your baby with his or her developmental and feeding skills. Keep in mind that every baby develops differently. Always adjust feedings based on your baby's abilities. Also, always introduce new foods one at a time and wait 5-7 days until introducing another new food.

GUIDELINES FOR FEEDING YOUR BABY					
Age	Physical signs	Hunger and feeding cues	Type of foods to introduce	Amounts of food	Baby's feeding skills
4 - 5 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits up with help or support</li> <li>On tummy, pushes up on arms with straight elbows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cries or fusses to show hunger</li> <li>Stops sucking, spits out nipple, or falls asleep when full</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iron-fortified <b>infant cereal, single grain</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4-8 tbsp infant cereal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baby has sucking and rooting reflexes which help him or her eat</li> </ul>
6 - 7 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits up with help or support</li> <li>On the tummy, pushes up on arms with straight elbows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moves head forward to reach for spoon when hungry</li> <li>Turns head away when full</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unflavored, cooked, pureed or mashed <b>vegetables and fruits</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4-8 tbsp infant cereal</li> <li>4 oz. juice</li> <li>4-6 tbsp vegetables or fruit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watches spoon, opens mouth for it</li> <li>Smacks lips</li> <li>May push food out of mouth with tongue</li> </ul>
8 - 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sits independently</li> <li>Can pick up and hold small objects</li> <li>Leans forward for spoon or food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaches for spoon or food when hungry</li> <li>Points to food when hungry</li> <li>Closes mouth or pushes food away when full</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unflavored, pureed, minced or finely chopped <b>meat, fish, cooked egg yolk</b></li> <li>Cooked, mashed <b>beans, lentils, tofu; grains, toast, crackers, dry unsweetened cereals</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4-10 tbsp infant cereal</li> <li>4 oz. juice</li> <li>4-12 tbsp vegetables or fruits</li> <li>1-4 tbsp meats</li> <li>1 egg yolk 3 times per week (optional)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teething starts</li> <li>Baby begins chewing up and down, lips move and close while chewing</li> <li>Holds bottle, drinks from cup with help</li> <li>Leans to keep thicker purees in mouth</li> <li>Can transfer food from one hand to another</li> </ul>
9 - 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learns to crawl</li> <li>May pull self up to stand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaches for and points to food when hungry</li> <li>Shows excitement when food is present when hungry</li> <li>Pushes food away when full</li> <li>Slows down in eating when full</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soft, bite-sized pieces of vegetables, fruits, meats/poultry</li> <li>Soft breads, mashed potatoes, rolls, rice noodles</li> <li>Yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4-10 tbsp infant cereal</li> <li>4 oz. juice</li> <li>6-16 tbsp vegetables or fruits</li> <li>2-7 tbsp. meats</li> <li>1 egg yolk 3 times per week (optional)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Baby is able to chew and bite foods</li> <li>Fine motor skills improve</li> <li>Licks food from bottom of lip</li> <li>Holds bottle and cup</li> <li>Picks up foods and puts it in mouth</li> <li>Plays with spoon</li> </ul>

Note: Don't use combination meat and vegetable dinners.

Note: Don't use fruit desserts.

Note: Fruit juice is not necessary, but may provide variety.

Note: During 9-12 months of age, slowly decrease mashed foods and offer more finger foods. Also, avoid foods that may cause choking, such as nuts, seeds, popcorn, chips, pretzels, raw carrots, raisins, whole grapes, and hot dog pieces.

