

Feeding Your Baby in the First Year

Breast milk is the best food for your baby! Breast milk provides the right mix of nutrients your baby needs to grow and develop. If you are away from your baby, you can provide your baby with expressed breast milk. This ensures your baby receives the best nutrition possible. When breast milk is not available, iron-fortified infant formula is an appropriate alternative for your infant's first year of life. Here are a few tips on what to feed your baby during the first year of life.

Birth - 4 month old baby



- Breastfeed whenever your baby desires, or every 2-3 hours.
- If formula feeding, provide iron-fortified infant formula. Your child's health care provider can help you determine how much infant formula to feed your baby.
- Never feed sweetened beverages, cow's milk, juice, cereal, sweetened gelatin or other foods to your baby in a bottle. Sweetened beverages include: water sweetened with sugar or honey, soda, sweetened iced tea, fruit drinks, punches, or ades, or other sweetened drinks.

4 - 6 month old baby



- Continue providing breast milk whenever your baby desires, or 5 feedings per day.
- If formula feeding, continue to provide iron-fortified infant formula. Your child's health care provider can help you determine how much infant formula to feed your baby.
- At this age, your child's health care provider is able to tell you if your baby is developmentally ready to try infant foods.
- It is important to only introduce one new, single ingredient food to your baby every 5 days. Be sure to watch your baby for signs of a reaction, such as rash, wheezing, or diarrhea after feeding a new food.
- If your child's health care provider recommends introducing solid foods, small amounts of infant foods, (1-2 Tb of each food per day), is all your baby needs. Introduce iron-fortified infant cereals, plain strained or pureed cooked vegetables, fruits, and protein-rich foods such as meats, egg yolk, and legumes.
- Your child's health care provider may recommend feeding your baby a small amount of sterile water (4 to 8 ounces per day) in a cup when foods rich in protein are introduced. Check with your child's health care provider concerning your baby's water needs.

6 - 8 month old baby



- Continue providing breast milk whenever your baby desires, or 3-5 feedings per day.
- If formula feeding, continue to provide iron-fortified infant formula. Your child's health care provider can help you determine how much infant formula to feed your baby.
- At this age, most infants are developmentally ready to try infant foods.
- It is important to only introduce one new, single ingredient food to your baby every 5 days. Be sure to watch your baby for signs of a reaction, such as rash, wheezing, or diarrhea after feeding a new food.
- Introduce iron-fortified infant cereals (4-6 Tb per day), plain strained or pureed cooked vegetables (3-4 Tb per day), fruits (3-4 Tb per day), and protein-rich foods such as meats, egg yolk, and legumes (1-2 Tb per day).
- Your child's health care provider may recommend feeding your baby a small amount of sterile water (4 to 8 ounces per day) in a cup when foods rich in protein are introduced. Check with your child's health care provider concerning your baby's water needs.

8 - 12 month old baby



- Continue providing breast milk whenever your baby desires, approximately 3-4 feedings per day.
- If formula feeding, continue to provide iron-fortified infant formula. Your child's health care provider can help you determine how much infant formula to feed your baby.
- Provide your baby with iron-fortified infant cereals or hot cereals (4-6 Tb per day), plain pureed, mashed or chopped cooked vegetables (3-4 Tb per day) and fruits (3-4 Tb per day), and pureed or chopped lean meat, poultry, fish, egg yolk, cheese, yogurt, or mashed legumes (1-3 Tb per day).
- Your child's health care provider may recommend feeding your baby a small amount of sterile water (4 to 8 ounces per day) in a cup when foods rich in protein are introduced. Check with your child's health care provider concerning your baby's water needs.