

# Feeding During the First Year of Life

*Feeding your baby during the first year of life is very important and can help you baby later in life. The first year of life is where the most growth occurs for your baby. Introducing new foods is also important and can help achieve healthy eating habits later in life, as well as growth and development.*

## First Four Months

- Ask your physician when it is ok to begin your infant on solid foods.
- Breast milk and formula provides you baby with all the nutrients needed for growth.
- Beginning too early with solid food can lead to risk for food allergies and childhood obesity.

	What To Feed	Signs Your Baby might be ready for food advancement
<b>0-4 Months</b>	Breast milk or formula ONLY	
<b>4-6 Months</b>	Breast milk or formula <u>PLUS</u> : -Semi-liquid iron-fortified rice cereal -Once tolerating rice cereal advance to other grain cereals like oats or Barley (For better nutrition look for whole grains on food label).	Watch for: -Holding up head -Sits in highchair -Makes chewing motion -Birth weight has doubled -Interest in food -Closes mouth around spoon -Moves food from front to back of mouth -Can move tongue back and forth -Seems hungry after 8-10 feedings with breast milk/ formula -Is teething
<b>6-8 Months</b>	Breast milk or formula <u>Plus</u> : -Iron-fortified cereals (rice, oats, barley). Look for whole grains on label. -Pureed or strained vegetables -Pureed or strained fruits * Introduction of vegetables before fruits is recommended.	Watch for same things from 4-6 months
<b>8-10 Months</b>	Breast milk or formula <u>PLUS</u> : -Small amounts of pasteurized cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese( no cow's milk until age 1) -Iron-fortified cereals(rice, barley, wheat, oats, mixed cereals) -Mashed vegetables and fruits -Finger Foods(lightly toasted bagel, cut up; small pieces of ripe banana; well-cooked spiral pasta; teething crackers; low sugar cereal) -Small amounts of protein (egg, pureed meats, poultry and boneless fish; tofu; well-cooked and mashed beans with soft skins like lentils, split peas, pintos, black beans) -Non-citrus juice (apple or pear)	Ready for solid/ finger foods when: -Same as 6-8 months <u>PLUS</u> -Picks up objects with thumb and forefinger -Transfers items from one hand to other -Puts everything in mouth -Moves jaw in chewing motion
<b>10-12 Months</b>	Breast milk or formula <u>PLUS</u> : -Small amounts of pasteurized cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese(no cow's milk until age 1) -Iron-fortified cereals(rice, barley, wheat, oats, mixed cereals) -Fruit cut into cubes or strips, or mashed -Bite-size, soft cooked vegetables (peas, carrots) -Combo foods (macaroni and cheese, casseroles) -Small amounts of protein (egg, pureed meats, poultry and boneless fish; tofu; well-cooked and mashed beans with soft skins like lentils, split peas, pintos, black beans) -Non-citrus juice (apple or pear)	Watch for: Same as 8-10 months <u>PLUS</u> : -Swallows food more easily -Has more teeth -No longer pushes food out with tongue -Trying to use spoon

\*Prior to advancing your baby's diet, consult with your physician.

\*\*Do not introduce the following foods due to choking hazards: whole grapes, hot dogs, whole cherries, raw carrots, hard candy

## Tips for Feeding Your Child

---

- When beginning on solid foods, introduce one food at a time. Give this food five to seven days prior to introducing a new food, this allow you to see if there is an allergic reaction to the new food.
- Start with small amounts first, try a teaspoon then gradually move on to a tablespoon.
- First solid foods include dry infant cereals, once these are accepted try and add vegetables, then fruits and meats.
- Do not add salt or sugar when making homemade baby foods. Canned foods also should not be used because they may contain high amounts of sugar or salt.
- Iron fortified infant cereals should be fed until the baby is 18-months old.
- Cow's milk should not be added until 12-months, it does not provide enough nutrients for your infant.
- When introducing fruit juice, try ones without sugar. These can be introduced when your baby is able to drink from a cup( around 6 months+)
- Feed your infant with a spoon only.
- Only formula and water/ breast milk should go into a bottle.
- Avoid any form of honey.
- Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle. This is linked to ear infections and choking.
- Ask your infants physician on how to wean your baby off the bottle.
- Do not force your child to clean their plate. This creates a bad habit of eating when there is food present, even if not hungry.
- Most babies require little to no extra water. Except in very warm weather. When solid food is introduced extra water is often needed.
- Offer a wide variety of foods to your baby; do not limit them to only the ones you like.
- Limit juice to 4-6 ounces per day.
- Dilute fruit juices with water: 50% water to 50% juice.

