



**I'm your baby. I grow best with love and the right food!**

### I need breastmilk or formula.

Feed me breastmilk or formula with iron until I turn one. You can still breastfeed me after one year.

I know when I get hungry or full. I let you know by the way I act. Please feed me when I act hungry. Let me eat until I act full.

I might drink breastmilk or formula 4 or more times a day. My tummy can hold about 6 to 8 ounces at a time.

- Hold me when you feed me. I feel safe in your arms.
- Sometimes I stop eating to talk with you or look around. I'm not full yet. Please talk to me. I love our time together.

### With your help I'll learn to eat foods.

After 6 months, I can start to eat foods. Please go slowly. If our family has allergies or I was born early, talk to my doctor or WIC before you start foods.

**Be sure that I'm ready.** To eat foods, I must be able to:

- Sit and hold my head steady.
- Show I want food by opening my mouth or taking it from a spoon.
- Show I don't want food by closing my mouth or turning my head away from you.

**Healthy foods help me grow strong.** Give me only one new food at a time. This helps me adjust to new foods.

Make my first food a single food. Make it thin by adding breastmilk or formula. Feed it to me once a day. Gradually, you can make it thicker. I might eat about a teaspoon to start with and then more as I get used to eating from a spoon. If I don't like something, wait a week, and try it again. I might need to try a new food 10 times before I like it.

Wait at least five days before introducing another new food. If I have a reaction to a new food, it might be just a temporary reaction. However, in a small number of cases, it could be an allergic reaction. If I vomit, wheeze, get a skin rash, or diarrhea, stop feeding me that food and call my doctor or nurse.



I don't need teeth to chew. Let me feed myself with my hands or a spoon. I use my jaws to mash food and my tongue and fingers to move it in my mouth.

I need to learn to eat my way. I'll open my mouth if I want more food. I'll keep my mouth closed or turn my head if I don't want more food; don't force me to eat. Be patient. I might spit food out or make a face. All babies do. I'll get food on my hands, face, and hair. Don't fuss or stress about the mess. Be proud of me as I learn to eat.

**Keep me safe.** Wash your hands and mine before you fix my food or feed me. Don't heat my food in a microwave oven. It could burn my mouth.

Put my food in a dish and feed it to me with a baby spoon. Throw out breastmilk or formula left in a bottle or cup or food left in a dish after I eat. Don't let me eat (or taste) food you're eating.

**DON'T give me foods I can choke on or get sick from, like:**

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- hot dogs or meat sticks
- peanut butter
- raw vegetables
- bacon
- whole grapes
- fish with bones
- potato, corn, or tortilla chips
- bologna or deli meats
- popcorn
- whole eggs or egg whites
- hard candy
- unpasteurized fruit juice
- raisins
- rare or raw meats
- nuts
- honey or food made with it

### Teach me to drink from a cup.

Use a small cup that doesn't break. Pour a little water into it. Lift the cup so it touches my lips and I get a taste.

- I need practice! Let me drink from a cup at meals. Hold the cup and let me take sips. I can drink breastmilk and formula in a cup, too.

As I learn to drink from a cup, I may drink less from the breast or a bottle. By one year, I should be "off" a bottle.

Don't give me punch, tea, or soda. The sugar hurts my teeth and doesn't help me grow strong.



## Let me eat food with my fingers.

By 8 or 9 months, I might want to eat food with my fingers. You still need to use a spoon to feed me. But, let me try to feed myself, too.

Fix foods so I can't choke on them. Safe "finger" foods are:

- Tiny pieces of cooked vegetables or soft fruit
- Tiny pieces of cooked meat, chicken, or turkey
- Mashed cooked beans, egg yolk, or tofu
- Chopped noodles or rice
- Bite-size pieces of toast, plain crackers, or soft tortilla

Make pieces of food no bigger than this: 

## How much should I eat?

I need to eat about 5 or 6 times a day. One meal might be breastmilk or formula. Another meal might be breastmilk or formula plus cereal. As I start eating more foods, you can give me 2 or 3 at a meal. Here are some ideas:

- Breastmilk or formula + baby oatmeal cereal + peaches
- Fork-mashed peas + rice + chopped chicken
- Breastmilk or formula in a cup + tiny pieces of banana + chopped noodles



Start with 1 or 2 tablespoons of each food. Give me more if I want it.

- Let me eat until I show signs I'm full. I might close my lips, turn or shake my head, or raise my arm. Ask me if I'm full. Then, let me stop eating if I want to.
- Eat with me at our family meals. I eat better when you are with me. Let's turn the TV off so we can talk.

**How do you know I eat enough?** The doctor says I'm gaining weight and growing well.

Please talk to WIC if you have questions about feeding me.



## Play with me!

Put me on a blanket on the floor. Put a toy just out of my reach so I can move to get it. Roll a ball to me. Hold both my hands and let me walk with you.

## Look what I can do!

I love to learn from you. Read to me. Sing a song. Let's play games like peek-a-boo and so-big. Take me for a walk and show me new things. I'm active—keep an eye on me!

### 6 to 9 Months

I can sit up and roll over. I'll start to creep and crawl. I like to shake things and drop them to see what happens.

### 9 to 12 Months

I like to use my hands. I can hold my cup. I like to point and wave bye-bye. I say da-da and ma-ma. I can pull myself up to stand.

## Health and Safety Tips

- I need check ups and shots to stay healthy. I should visit the doctor at 6 months, 9 months, and one year of age.
- I must sit when I eat. Never leave me alone when I eat or when changing or bathing me.
- Clean my gums and teeth with a clean, wet, soft cloth after I eat. Ask the doctor if I need fluoride.
- Never put me to bed with a bottle. I could choke, get an earache, or ruin my teeth.
- If other people feed me, be sure to ask what and how much I eat.
- Let me explore and learn. See each room like I will from the floor, and make it safe for me.
- Keep me away from cigarette, tobacco and all other smoke. Smoke hurts my lungs and can make me sick.
- Buckle me into an infant car seat before we ride in a car. It's the law! Install my seat in the car's back seat, facing backwards.



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EAT  
GROW  
LIVE HEALTHY



6-12  
Months

Tips For Me As An Older Baby