

Feeding - Infant Nutrition

Birth to Six Months

Offer only breast milk or iron-fortified formula, either of which is your baby's most important source of calories and nutrition for the first year of life. Do not give your baby cow's milk until after their first birthday.

Four to Eight Months

Introduce iron-fortified rice cereal mixed with breast milk or formula, followed by oat and barley cereal.

Six to Eight Months

Offer plain, strained baby vegetables, such as peas, carrots, and squash. You can also give up to 4-6 ounces a day of diluted non-citrus 100 percent fruit juice. Offer juice only as part of a meal or snack, and always serve it in a cup instead of a bottle. Do not serve juice more than once per day; it is a treat and not a nutritious staple food. Excessive juice is not good for teeth or nutrition. You can also begin offering water several times a day and "finger foods" such as Cheerios and raisins.

Seven to Ten Months

Give strained or mashed vegetables and fruits, such as bananas, applesauce, or pears. Introduce one new food at a time. Offer vegetables before fruits so your baby doesn't develop just a taste for sweets. Prepare cooked egg yolks or other protein sources, including finely cut and chopped meat or poultry. Do not worry if your child doesn't like meat, poultry or fish yet. A good all-veggie diet is fine. It is OK for your child to eat with their fingers, but offer a spoon and allow them to sit at the dinner table with the family to observe proper table etiquette.

Nine to Twelve Months

Introduce soft combination table foods such as casseroles, macaroni and cheese, spaghetti, etc. It is now appropriate to offer yogurt, cheese and beans.

Choking Warning!

Avoid anything solid and circular or hard such as nuts, hot dogs cut in circles, whole grapes, etc. because of the risk of choking. Be especially careful with meat. These food items must be cut into small pieces. Popcorn, peanuts and peanut butter are another frequent cause of choking. Do NOT allow your child to walk around and snack or eat. Eating should be exclusively at the table at this time to establish a good eating pattern, decrease choking risk, and avoid eating foods that have been placed or dropped on dirty surfaces.