

Feed Me! Birth to 6 Months

A helpful
guide to
feeding your
baby from
birth to 6
months old.



From birth

Breastfeed me, or feed me baby formula with iron.

If you're breastfeeding me, please continue until my first birthday or longer.

Please don't feed me any other foods until I am about 6 months old. I'm not ready for them yet!



I know when I need to eat.

Feed me when I show you I am hungry. I will move my arms and legs, turn my head and open my mouth. I might suck on my hand or fuss a little. Please feed me before I cry.

I know how much to eat.

Let me eat until I show you I am full. I will stop sucking and let go. If I close my mouth and turn away, that means I am done. If you feed me with a bottle, please don't try to make me finish it!



How do you know if I'm eating enough?

After the first week, I will have 6 or more wet diapers every day. The doctor will say that I am gaining weight and growing well.

Birth to 4 months

I need to eat about 8 to 12 times or more in 24 hours.

I might want to eat more often when I'm growing faster. My tummy can hold about 2 to 3 ounces at a time.

It might take me 3 months or more to be able to sleep through the night, 6 hours or more. Please be patient with me. Please don't put cereal in my bottle to try to help me sleep. I'm not ready for cereal yet!



4 to 6 months

I need to eat about 6 to 8 times or more in 24 hours.

My tummy can hold about 4 to 6 ounces at a time.

I need your touch. Smile and talk to me. I love to look at your face. If you feed me with a bottle, don't prop up my bottle or put me in bed with it. Please hold me close when you feed me.



Dad—please hold me and talk to me

You can bathe me, change my diaper, burp me, read to me, and play with me! I love to spend time with you.

Around 6 months

When I am about 6 months old, I will probably be ready to try some solid foods. I need to be able to do all these things:

- sit up with support
- hold my head steady
- put my fingers or toys in my mouth
- show I want food by opening my mouth
- close my lips over the spoon
- show I don't want food by turning my head away
- keep food in my mouth and swallow it



If our family has food allergies or I was born early, talk to the doctor and WIC before you try feeding me other foods.

When I'm ready, try feeding me a little bit of solid food.

You can start with baby cereal with iron—try rice, oatmeal, or barley. Mix the cereal with breastmilk or formula—make it thin at first. When I get better at eating it, you can make it thicker.

Feed me my food with a baby spoon. Cereal in my bottle can make me gain too much weight—and I need to learn to use a spoon!



Around 6 months continued



I need to sit up to eat.

Hold the spoon near my mouth and wait for me to look at it. Then, put a little bit on my lips so I can taste it.

Wait until I open my mouth before you try to put food in.

Wait until I am ready for each bite. **When I turn my head away, that means I am done.** Don't try to get me to eat more!



Be patient while I am learning to eat.

If I won't eat baby cereal, wait a week and try again. I will do better when I am ready. Start feeding me baby cereal by about 7 months, unless my doctor says to wait.

Keep me safe and healthy!

- Wash your hands before you feed me. Germs could make me sick.
- If you feed me with a bottle, only put breastmilk or formula in it. If you feed me formula, mix it the way the can says.
- You can store bottles of breastmilk in the refrigerator for 5 days. Formula is safe for 24 hours. You can also freeze breastmilk—ask WIC how.
- If you heat my bottle or container of food, please shake or stir it well, and test it before feeding me.
- Throw away what is left in the bottle when I am done. It could make me sick if I drink it later.
- Wipe my gums after I eat. Use a soft wet cloth.
- Don't feed me honey or foods made with honey. I could get serious food poisoning.
- I don't need to drink water or juice. I get all the liquid I need from breastmilk or formula. Please don't give me any sweet drinks or soda.
- Take me to the doctor for my check ups and shots.
- Put me on my back to sleep.
- Keep me away from tobacco smoke.
- Never leave me alone at bath time or while you are changing my diaper.
- Always put me in my car seat when we ride in a car. Put my seat in the back seat, facing backwards. Never leave me alone in the car.
- Crying is my way to say I need you. When you come to me, I calm down. I learn that you care. Holding me will not spoil me.

