

Feeding your BABY

Birth to 6 Months

Breastfeeding is the natural way to feed your baby and breastmilk is the best source of nutrition for your baby's first year of life. All your baby needs to eat for the first six months is breastmilk, formula or a combination of both.

**WIC is here to help answer your questions
about feeding your baby.**



Feeding Your Baby – Monthly Guidelines

These feeding amounts are common guidelines if you are using bottles. Sometimes your baby may eat more or less than the amounts listed. Breastfed babies eat when they are hungry and stop when they are full. No matter how you are feeding your baby, watch for signs of hunger and signs of fullness. If your baby was premature, talk to WIC about feeding guidelines.

MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4	MONTH 5	MONTH 6
Feed every 2 to 3 hours • 1 ½ - 3 oz/feeding • 18 - 26 oz/day Avoid bottles and pacifiers for the first month if you are exclusively breastfeeding.	Feed every 3 to 4 hours • 3 - 4 oz/feeding • 22 - 32 oz/day	Feed every 3 to 4 hours • 3 - 5oz/feeding • 24 - 35 oz/day	Feed every 3 to 4 hours • 4 - 6 oz/feeding • 29 - 40 oz/day	Feed every 3 to 4 hours • 4 - 8 oz/feeding • 29 - 40 oz/day	Feed every 3 to 4 hours • 4 - 8 oz/feeding • 29 - 40 oz/day • Start infant food • Start sips of water from an open cup or spoon
BABY WILL: Have poor head control • Move toward nipple • Suck and swallow milk Ask WIC or your baby's doctor about vitamin D.		BABY WILL: Sit alone or with help • Hold head up • Open mouth for food Move food from front of mouth to back			

Babies under 6 months do not need extra water to drink. They get the water they need in breastmilk or formula. Most babies are not ready for infant food until 6 months. Your baby may not get the amount of breastmilk or formula needed if you start infant food too early. Giving food too early can also increase your baby's risk for obesity.

Keeping Baby Safe

Babies can get sick easily from germs. Protect your baby with extra care.

- Wash your hands before feeding and after diapering your baby.
- Wash your hands before pumping breastmilk and before preparing bottles of breastmilk or formula.
- Use refrigerated breastmilk within 5 days.
- Use refrigerated prepared formula within 24 hours.
- Heat bottles under running warm water, not in the microwave.
- Boil/sterilize bottles, bottle parts and breast pump equipment until baby is 2 - 3 months old.
- Throw out leftover breastmilk or formula still in the bottle after 1 hour.
- Be sure to mix formula the way the can says or how your baby's doctor tells you. Mixing formula the wrong way can harm your baby.

Starting Infant Food 6 Months

By 6 months most babies are ready to start infant food along with the breastmilk and/or formula routine. Introduce one new food at a time and wait 2-7 days before adding another new food. WIC provides infant cereal and infant vegetables and fruits at 6 months. WIC also provides infant meat for exclusively breastfed babies at 6 months.

Signs your baby is ready for infant food

- Sits with help
- Has good head control
- Shows interest when others eat
- Opens mouth for food

1) Start with infant cereal first

- Single grain infant cereal like rice or barley
- 1 Tablespoon cereal mixed in a bowl with 1-2 Tablespoons of breastmilk or formula
- Offer 1 to 2 times/day

2) Advance to include infant vegetables and fruits

- 1-2 Tablespoons of infant vegetable or fruit
- Offer 1 to 2 times/day

3) Try infant meats last

Feed your baby from a bowl with a small spoon. Food should be smooth and runny at first. Start offering small sips of water to your baby from a small open cup or spoon.

NO cereal in a bottle

NO juice before 6 months

NO juice in a bottle

NO cow milk, goat milk, soy milk or nut milk before 1 year

NO honey before 1 year

Signs of Hunger

- Opening and closing mouth
- Sucking fist
- Moves head toward nipple
- Fussiness

Signs of Fullness

- Seals lips together
- Turns head away
- Spits out nipple
- Decreases or stops sucking

Feeding Tips

- Feed baby when awake and calm
- Always hold your baby if you bottle feed - NEVER prop the bottle or put your baby to bed with a bottle
- Be relaxed and patient
- Burp baby
- Stop feeding when baby shows he is done
- Avoid putting your baby on a strict feeding schedule - Feed your baby when he wants to eat

Call Your Baby's Doctor If You Suspect Allergic Reactions

- Skin rash or hives
- Swelling
- More gas than usual
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Blood in stool
- Breathing problems



- **Breastfed babies and babies who get at least some breastmilk are healthier!**
- **Breastfeeding has many health benefits for mom too.**
- **Most babies need only breastmilk, formula or a combination of both until 6 months old.**
- **Provide breastmilk for the first year of life and longer if mom and baby want.**

Ask WIC About

- Resources and information on pumping your breastmilk
- Cleaning, preparing and storing bottles, formula and breastmilk - Keep baby safe!

Visit wichealth.org for more information about feeding your baby.

wichealth.org

To contact WIC and other public services in your community, call 211.



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65,000 printed at 11.0 cents each with a total cost of \$7,286.48.

DCH-1480 • May 2016

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