

Feeding Guidelines

BIRTH- 6 MONTHS:

- Ideally babies should be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months. Breastfeeding is usually on demand, every 2-4hrs.
- Babies that are exclusively breastfed need Vit D supplementation.
- Any mother taking medications should check with a health care provider.
- Should a mother choose not to breastfeed, infant formula should be used.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for about 6 months, followed by continued breastfeeding as complementary foods are introduced, with continuation of breastfeeding for 1 year or longer as mutually desired by mother and infant.

6 months- 1 year:

When to start solid foods:

- In general the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends starting solid foods between 4 and 6 months in a non-exclusively breastfed baby. Some signs that your baby is ready for solid foods include:
 - Holding head erect when sitting
 - Ability to keep tongue in his/her mouth

- Reaching for food when adults are eating
- Consuming more than 32 oz. of formula a day.
- Please check with your physician when is the right time for your baby to begin solid foods.
- Traditionally, solids are started with iron-rich cereals- rice, oatmeal or barley. Start with daily feeding and gradually increase to 2-3 times a day.
- For the first year of life, the main source of nutrition for your baby is still formula. The amount of formula is generally between 24 and 32oz per day.
- After starting cereal you can then choose any meat, vegetable, or fruit.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics and The American Academy of Allergy Immunology no longer recommend waiting until 2-3 years to introduce highly allergenic foods. In fact, the earlier these foods are introduced the less likely your child can suffer from a food allergy. Foods to avoid, however, include honey and cow's milk before 1 year of age. (You may start with dairy products, such as yogurt and cheese)
- Around 7-8 months, once a baby can handle pureed foods, you may start introducing soft table foods. Cheerios or puffs make good first finger foods.
- Also around 6 months it is a good idea to introduce a sippy cup. Only water or formula should be used. No juice!

1-2 Years

- At 12 months a baby who is formula fed may change to whole milk. The recommended amount of whole milk is between 16-20 oz.
- Around 12 months most babies are comfortable eating a variety of table foods.
- Try to encourage and offer new foods during this time. Most children are not picky at this age and will eat anything they are offered. We want to start building healthy eating habits even at this age!

2 years and beyond

- Switch from whole milk to low fat milk.
- Continue to offer a wide variety of healthy foods.

PICKY EATERS:

It is quite common after the second year of life for toddlers to become picky eaters. Some important points to remember are:

- Toddlers do not need to eat three meals a day
- A serving size for a toddler is THEIR palm size. Thus a few bites of chicken might be sufficient for them
- Their caloric intake requirement is much less than it was in the first year of life. Children typically gain 3-5 pounds a year.
- Do not engage in a battle with your child over food. Simply offer healthy foods and set good examples by eating

healthily and having family dinners.