



10 STEPS FOR



Practical advice for healthy eating habits from pregnancy to preschool

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Feeding Babies 0-12 months

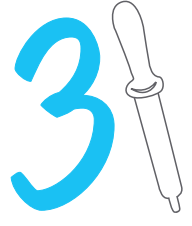


1 BREASTFEEDING HELPS PROTECT YOUR BABY FROM ILLNESS

it may take time for you both to learn how it works best for you - ask for help if you need it



2 GIVE BREAST MILK, THE BEST OPTION, OR INFANT FORMULA FOR AT LEAST 12 MONTHS



3 BEGIN A VITAMIN D SUPPLEMENT FROM BIRTH

as milk and foods do not necessarily provide enough



4 LET YOUR BABY DECIDE HOW MUCH MILK TO DRINK

Offer a feed when your baby is hungry and remember babies cry for reasons other than hunger

5 BEGIN TO OFFER FOOD ALONGSIDE THEIR MILK FEEDS, BY 6 MONTHS BUT NOT BEFORE 4 MONTHS

when you think your baby is ready for more



6 OFFER HIGH IRON FOODS FROM BEGINNING OF COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING (WEANING)

(weaning) - meat, oily fish, eggs, pulses and nut butters



7 OFFER SPOON-FEEDING, SOFT FINGER FOODS AND A CUP OF WATER

at all meals so that your baby develops all their feeding skills

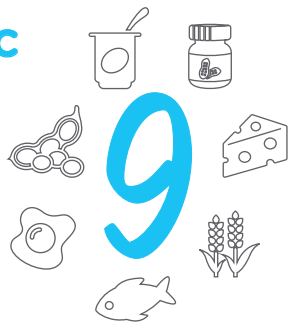
8 STOP FEEDING WHEN YOUR BABY SHOWS YOU HE OR SHE HAS HAD ENOUGH

by keeping his mouth closed or turning away from food or milk



9 INTRODUCE ALLERGENIC FOODS ONE AT A TIME, FROM 4 TO 6 MONTHS

yogurt, cheese, egg, nut butters, fish, wheat-based foods and foods with soya or sesame



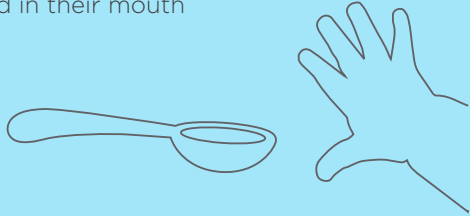
10 MOVE ONTO THICK MASH WITH SOFT LUMPS BETWEEN 6 AND 8 MONTHS

and onto minced and chopped family foods and firm finger foods between 9 and 12 months



RESPONSIVE FEEDING:

- Offer food or milk when your baby is hungry
- Stop when your baby signals they have had enough food or milk by:
 - keeping their mouth shut
 - turning away from, or pushing away, a spoon, nipple or teat
 - holding food in their mouth



FEEDING SKILLS TAKE TIME TO LEARN AND PERFECT

- Babies develop them at different rates
- Practice makes perfect but this can be tiring and a little each day is enough
- Your smiling encouraging face will help
- Offer both spoon feeding and finger foods
- Gagging or coughing back lumps is part of learning
- Offering water from a lidded cup without a valve means learning to sip
- Always stay with your baby when they are eating or drinking

BEGIN WITH SAVOURY TASTES THAT ARE HIGH IN IRON AND ENERGY

Combine:

- 1/3 high iron foods: meat/fish/eggs/nut butter/pulses (lentils, hummus, starchy beans)
- 1/3 starchy food: potato/rice/pasta/bread
- 1/3 vegetables

Keep the sweet tastes of fruit and yogurt for a second course – don't mix them into the savoury course

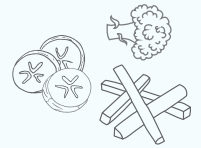
PRETERM BABIES

- Discuss when to begin with your baby's medical team – it is usually around four to six months after their EDD
- Introduce foods in the same way as for term babies
- Some preterm babies may need extra support for sitting and keeping their head upright

FINGER FOODS

FINGER FOODS HELP BABIES TO:

- develop their self-feeding skills
- learn to recognise foods and
- learn to like single tastes



Babies' gums contain their teeth and are hard enough for chewing – you do not need to wait for the teeth to come through

SOFT FINGER FOODS FROM EARLY IN WEANING

- Soft roasted, steamed or boiled vegetable sticks, e.g. carrot, courgette, parsnip, pepper, potato and sweet potato
- Cooked vegetable pieces, e.g. cauliflower and broccoli florets
- Soft ripe fruit pieces. e.g. mango, melon, banana, pear, peach, papaya and kiwi
- Cooked pasta pieces
- Soft toast crusts
- Soft cheese sticks
- Pieces of fish or fish and potato cake - remove any bones

FIRMER FINGER FOODS FROM AROUND 9 MONTHS

- Pieces of raw fruit e.g. plums, apricots, strawberries pieces, apples
- Fruits with the pips or stones removed e.g. halved cherries, halved grapes, and segments of oranges, satsumas, and clementines
- Raw vegetables: sticks of cucumber, carrot, peppers, courgette
- Crusts of bread or toast, rice cakes, crackers, oatcakes, bread sticks
- Pitta bread strips with hummus or nut butter
- Sandwiches with soft fillings
- Pieces of hard boiled egg or omelette
- Cheddar cheese pieces
- Soft cooked pieces of meat loaf, burger, chicken, falafel, bhaji and other very soft, slow cooked meat

NB: Avoid soft round pieces of food e.g. cherry tomatoes, whole grapes, rounds of sausage – cut them in half so they are not round

A small number of infants may take much longer to learn to accept and manage these tastes and textures – keep offering them

Interested in finding out more? Visit www.infantandtoddlerforum.org

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If you have any questions or concerns about your infant's health speak to your GP or health visitor.

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