



Infant Diet Guidelines



Birth to 4 Months Breast milk or formula. No solid foods. No juice or water should be given. (If you feel your infant needs a different formula, please call us.) Give breast fed infants D-Vi-Sol, one dropper once per day.

4 to 5 Months For breastfed infants especially, an extra iron source is needed by 5 months old. Infant **cereal** is the major source of iron in infant diets. Feed it daily. Start with infant cereal (we recommend oatmeal) mixed with breast milk or formula. Feed with a spoon at breakfast and dinner. Start with a couple teaspoons the first few times. If baby cannot eat off a spoon, try again in 2 weeks. Over time increase the amount to 3-6 tablespoons twice a day. Other infant cereals may be added at any time.

4 to 6 Months Next: Add jarred **meats** (available as “stage 2” foods or mixed with fruits or vegetables) once per day. Egg yolks may be introduced, but they will need to be pureed or mashed. You may add a new food every 2-3 days. Next, add 2-6 tablespoons (1-3 oz.) of **vegetables** and **fruits** at lunch and dinner, introducing one at a time. By 6 months old, your infant should be eating cereal twice per day and a variety of meats, fruits and vegetables 3 times per day.

Before 9 Months Studies suggest that early introduction of allergy-causing foods, especially peanut and egg, will decrease the risk of food allergy. We recommend introducing all foods before 9 months old, including foods containing **eggs, peanuts, milk, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, wheat and soy**. These foods must be mashed or pureed. To start, mix **small** amounts of these with other foods, perhaps adding a nut butter to a fruit or vegetable. Increase amounts as your baby tolerates it. In studies, giving 2 teaspoons of smooth peanut butter and 2/3 of a hard-boiled egg per week decreased the risk of allergy. If these foods are tolerated, continue giving these foods every week.

Add foods according to what the family eats. Do not give cow’s milk as a drink, but it can be added to dishes or given as yogurt or cheese. Average 7 months old babies eat 6 tablespoons of solids 3 times a day. Give a few ounces of water with meals in a sippy cup. Continue cereal and meat daily.

8 to 12 Months **Lumpy or textured foods** should be given before 10 months old to improve acceptance. Table foods can be mashed and fed to baby at mealtimes. By 10 months, babies might eat 8 tablespoons of solids three times a day. You may add soft **table foods** that can easily be mashed by baby (banana, cooked peas, potato, Cheerios®, pasta, etc.). Avoid foods that can cause choking such as grapes, hotdogs, peanuts, raisins or raw vegetables. Do not give honey until 12 months old. Though fruit juices may be added, they are not necessary and should not exceed 4 ounces daily.

1 Year & Older You may breast feed to any age. Formula-fed children may switch to **cow’s milk** or a toddler formula. About 16-24oz of either a day is sufficient. Avoid giving over 24 oz. If your child’s weight is high, or if obesity or heart disease runs in your family, your toddler should drink 2% milk. If not, whole milk (3.25% fat) is okay. If your child cannot tolerate cow’s milk, soy milk is the only reasonable substitute. Almond milk, rice milk and the sort are not healthy for young children. Eliminate the bottle before 15 months old.

GENERAL FEEDING ADVICE: Most parents give solid foods first, and then offer bottle or breastfeeding. Baby foods come as 1st, 2nd and 3rd Stage. The 2nd foods are thicker than 1st foods and come in larger jars. Any infant ready to feed can eat 1st or 2nd foods at any time. The 3rd foods have more texture and are for more experienced eaters (7-9 months old). Infants with a high salt (sodium) diet have higher blood pressure, possibly for decades. Do not add salt. Avoid processed (packaged) foods or fast food.

FOOD ALLERGIES: Allergic reactions usually involve hives, watery or bloody stools, vomiting, excessive colic or stomachache. Wheezing or coughing may also develop. The most common allergy producing foods are **cow’s milk, egg whites, peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, wheat products and soy products**. For pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, studies have not shown that changes to the maternal diet can decrease allergy risks.

MAKING BABY FOODS: You can make your baby food at home if you wish. A reference book (like Feed Me, I’m Yours) can be helpful. Do not add salt or sugar. Do not prepare your own spinach, beets, turnips or collard greens (use jarred instead).