

Feeding Your Baby: 6–12 Months

6 Months

At 6 months your baby is able to:

- Roll over both ways
- Support the upper body and head well while on his or her stomach
- Sit with support at 6 months and without support by 7–8 months
- Hold smaller objects in his or her hands
- Track well with his or her eyes
- Begin making munching movements as jaw and tongue movements are more coordinated



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Feeding Tips

- Continue breastfeeding on demand until your baby is at least 1 year of age.
- Introduce strained meats (stage 1 chicken, lamb, turkey, beef, and veal) 2–4 tablespoons per day. Then introduce stage 2 meat/vegetable combinations or prepare your own combinations of meats and vegetables at home, as long as your baby has tried each part separately.
- Other protein foods that can be added to your baby's diet include cooked and mashed beans, yogurt, cottage cheese, tofu, and egg yolk.
- Start with teaspoon-size servings and increase gradually to 1–2 tablespoon-size servings.
- Introduce and encourage the use of a cup.
- You may give diluted fruit juices. Limit juice to only 4 ounces daily. Give juice in a cup to prevent tooth decay.



- Avoid desserts and sweets. The extra fat and sugar add unnecessary calories to your baby's diet.
- Your baby will now take 3–4 breast milk or iron-fortified formula feedings of 6 ounces for a total of 18–24 ounces.
- Solid foods will now make up about 30 percent (one-third) of your baby's total daily dietary intake.



9-12 Months

At 9–12 months, your baby is able to:

- Sit up straight in a high chair
- Grasp food with hands or fingertips
- Move food from hands to mouth
- Drink from a cup
- Feed him- or herself with fingers
- Crawl and pull up to stand
- Use gums and tongue to mash “lumpy” food



Sample menu for a 9-12 month infant:

Breakfast

Infant cereal	4 tbsp.
Diced or mashed bananas	2 tbsp.



Lunch

Diced turkey	2 tbsp.
Peas	2 tbsp.
Cooked pasta	1 tbsp.

Dinner

Diced chicken	2 tbsp.
Mashed potatoes	2 tbsp.
Diced peaches	2 tbsp.

Breast milk or formula (6 oz.) three times a day

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Feeding Tips

- Give your baby three meals a day and two nutritious snacks in addition to three breast milk or iron-fortified formula feedings (6–8 ounces each) with meals.
- Offer a variety of blended or mashed “lumpy” foods, such as stage 3 and junior “graduate” food and table food with a chunkier texture.

Examples:

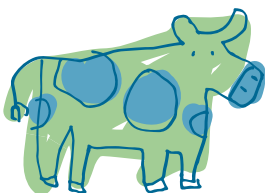
soft fruit wedges or slices
soft cooked vegetable slices
diced fruits and vegetables
toast strips or bread
mashed potatoes
crackers
pasta



dry, unsweetened cereal such as Cheerios
small, tender bits of meat (poultry)
grated or soft cheese wedges
beans and peas
cottage cheese
rice
yogurt



- Begin to introduce bite-size finger food to encourage self-feeding.
- Continue breastfeeding or give iron-fortified formula until 12 months of age, then begin using whole milk (homogenized vitamin D).
- Give food that is appealing to your baby, such as finger food, food that crunches or crackles, foods that differ in texture, and food with different flavors and colors.
- Your baby may try a new food if it is prepared in an attractive manner.



- A favorite or familiar food served with a new food may encourage acceptance of different foods.
- Give foods high in iron, such as red meat, poultry, iron-enriched cereals, beans of all types, egg yolks, sweet potatoes, and spinach, to prevent anemia.



Encourage healthy eating habits:

- Do not use food as a reward for good behavior. Use praise, hugs, kisses, and other nonfood rewards.
- Do not force feedings. Do not overfeed. Be alert to your baby's cues of being full.
- Offer a variety of foods. Try a new food along with a familiar food. Do not worry if a food is rejected the first time.
- Do not offer your baby food every time he or she cries or as a way to distract and keep him or her occupied. Comfort or cuddle your baby, read, or play with him or her instead.
- Offer your baby a variety of fruits and vegetables. Infants who have early eating experiences with a variety of fruits and vegetables are more likely to eat them later when they begin making their own choices.
- Limit sweets.
- Follow a daily meal routine.

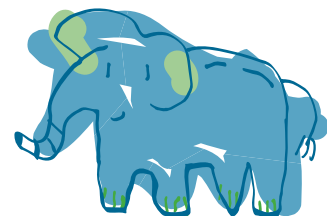


- Avoid the “clean plate syndrome.” Forcing your child to eat all the food on his or her plate even when he or she is not hungry is not a good habit. It teaches your child to eat just because the food is there, not because he or she is hungry.
- An overweight baby is not a healthy baby. Studies have shown that obesity in childhood dramatically increases the odds of obesity in adulthood.

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Feeding Safety

- Avoid giving your baby hard foods such as nuts, raw carrots, celery, popcorn, chips, or hard candies that may cause choking.
- Avoid egg whites, honey, and cow's milk until the age of one year.
- Citrus, strawberries, peanut butter, and fish are more likely to cause allergies than other solids and should be introduced with caution at one year of age or later.
- If peanut butter is offered, spread it thinly. In a large amount, peanut butter can possibly be a choking hazard.
- Always stay with your baby while he or she is eating to watch for choking hazards.
- Never sweeten foods with honey in the first year because of the risk of botulism.
- Expect a smaller and pickier appetite as your baby's growth rate slows around one year of age.

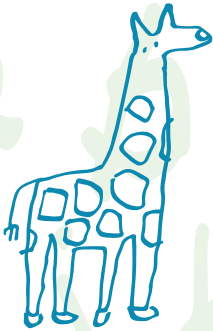


An active baby is a healthy baby!

*Play with your baby.
Let him or her play
with soft balls, mobiles,
and soft blocks.*



*Don't limit your baby in a playpen.
Create safe areas for your baby to
roll, crawl, or walk.*



*Let your baby reach for a musical mobile
above the crib and for toys that are a little
out of reach.*



*Give your baby "tummy time,"
so that the neck and chest muscles
develop.*

Do not use a walker.



Most of all, have fun with your baby!