

Feeding your baby

(Birth to one year)



Feeding your baby in the first year is an experience of discovery for everyone involved. In just one year your baby will go from exclusively breastfeeding to sitting at the table and enjoying a wide variety of foods with the rest of the family.

What's inside this booklet...

- Feeding your newborn
- Starting solids
- Food allergies
- Safety tips for feeding
- Sample menus
- When is your baby ready for finger foods?
- Answers to frequently asked questions



Birth to six months

Feeding your baby can be one of the most rewarding experiences of parenthood. Not only do you nourish your baby's body, you nourish your relationship with your baby. Feeding is a time for you to bond, so enjoy this time, cuddle with and talk to your baby.

In the first six months, the only food your baby needs is breastmilk. Babies do not need additional fluids, such as water or juice before six months of age. If you are not breastfeeding, offer iron-fortified infant formula instead.

Babies who are not breastfed have an increased risk of:

- Ear, respiratory and gastrointestinal infections
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Allergies, if there is a family history of allergies

Combining bottle and breastfeeding

If your baby's health care provider has recommended giving some formula because of breastfeeding challenges or low milk supply, consider:

- Combining breastfeeding and bottle feeding using formula
- Bottle feeding using pumped breastmilk and formula

If you are breastfeeding and bottle feeding, offer the breast at each feeding. Not offering the breast at every feeding can lower your milk supply.

Any amount of breastmilk your baby gets has a positive impact on your baby's health due to the unique structure of breastmilk. Formula does not have the biological ingredients of breastmilk.

If you have questions about breastfeeding or how to safely prepare and feed your baby infant formula, contact York Region Community and Health Services *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653 (TTY 1-866-252-9933) or email HC@york.ca.

How to feed your baby

Your baby's appetite is the best guide to knowing when to feed her. You can tell if your baby is hungry if they are turning their head toward you with an open mouth or sucking on their hand vigorously. Crying is a late sign of hunger.

Your baby will tell you they are full when they pull off the breast, turn their head away, or seem satisfied or full (they may or may not fall asleep).



Trust that your baby knows how much to eat. Watch for your baby's cues and stop feeding when they tell you they are full.

Vitamin D

All babies living in Canada need 400 IU of vitamin D daily.

- Babies who are exclusively breastfed should receive a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU daily until one year of age
- If your baby is drinking a combination of breastmilk and infant formula, a vitamin D supplement may still be needed
- If you are offering infant formula to your baby, vitamin D is added to the formula; however, depending on how much your baby drinks, they may still need an additional vitamin D supplement

To learn more about vitamin D needs in the first year, visit www.york.ca/nutrition to get a copy of the fact sheet *Vitamin D and Your Baby* from the 'Fact sheets and Resources' page or call *EatRight Ontario* at 1-877-510-5102 and speak to a registered dietitian.

Iron

Iron is an important nutrient for your baby. Most healthy babies born at full-term have enough iron stored in their bodies to last up to six months.

Babies who are born to mothers with low iron and those who were born premature or at a low birth weight may require iron supplements (e.g., iron drops) before six months. If you are concerned, speak to your baby's health care provider.

Breastmilk contains small amounts of iron, but your baby's body does a good job of absorbing this iron.

If you are not breastfeeding, it is important to provide your baby with an iron-fortified infant formula.

Since a baby's iron stores last up to 6 months, it is important to start solid foods, focusing on foods rich in iron (e.g., meats, iron-fortified baby cereal) at six months.



At 6 months

Starting solid foods

It is time to start solids at six months (26 weeks) so your baby continues to get the energy and nutrients they need to grow and be healthy. In addition to breastmilk, or, if not breastfeeding, iron-fortified formula, your baby now needs more calories, iron, zinc and other nutrients.

Until about one year of age, breastmilk, or if not breastfeeding, iron-fortified formula, will continue to be your baby's most important food.

Starting solid foods is a new way of eating and the following advice will help make this a positive experience for both you and your baby.

Why start solids at six months?

You will probably receive different advice from many people on how to feed your baby. You may also find information on the Internet or in books. Some of this information can be outdated or not based on Canadian recommendations.

Although it was once common practice to feed babies solids as early as four months of age, this is not recommended any longer as it can interfere with how much your baby will drink and can affect their growth. Also, babies at four months of age are not developmentally ready for solid foods. Health Canada, Dietitians of Canada and the Canadian Paediatric Society recommend exclusive breastfeeding until six months of age, followed by the addition of solid foods at six months of age, with continued breastfeeding for up to two years and beyond.

Is your baby ready for solid foods?

Waiting until your baby is ready for solids will ensure your baby can digest solids and has the skills and interest in new foods to be successful at eating.

Look for the signs of readiness for solids in your baby which can include:

- Sit up with little support
- Hold their head up
- Open their mouth wide when offered food on a spoon
- Turn their face away to let you know they are full or just not hungry
- Control their tongue better so it doesn't push the food back out of their mouth
- Use their lips to remove food from the spoon
- Show interest in what you are eating

What do I need to get started?

You don't need special 'baby food' equipment to feed your baby solids. Here is a short list of the basic items you'll find helpful to have at hand:

- Baby spoons with soft tip. Lots of babies love to grab the spoon. Why not use two spoons - one for you and one for baby to practice with!



- Bib and washclothes
- Small bowl or cup (a ramekin or tea cup works well)

You can use a baby food mill, blender, food processor or even your fork to make food for your baby. Babies eat pureed foods for only a few months so feel free to use what you already have in your home.

Which to choose — homemade or store-bought baby food?

Choosing homemade or store-bought baby food is a personal choice. Many parents do a combination of both. The following are features of both types of baby food:

Homemade baby food

- Is less expensive
- Allows you to change the texture easily
- Allows you to offer a wider variety of foods to your baby

Store-bought baby food

- Convenient
- Safe
- Requires you to thicken texture of single ingredient items once your baby is ready for more challenging textures (at about 7-8 months). When your baby is ready, thicken store bought baby food by adding iron-fortified baby cereal to it or by mixing it with yogurt, homemade meats or other foods
- Be sure any store-bought baby food doesn't have any added sugar or salt. Watch out for words such as fruit 'dessert' as it will have added sugars and starches

What about organic food?

Buying organic baby food or preparing baby food made from organic ingredients is a personal choice. Be aware that organic foods do not provide more nutrients than non-organic foods and they often cost more to buy.

When and where?

Breastmilk is still the most important part of your baby's diet. It provides most of the nutrition your baby needs to grow and develop in the first year.

Breastfeed, or if not breastfeeding, offer formula before you offer solid foods. This will ensure your baby gets all the nutrients and fluids they need.

If you find your baby isn't very interested in solids after breastfeeding, then wait 15-20 minutes (but not longer) to offer solids.

Here are some tips:

- Have your baby sit upright (e.g., in a highchair), when eating solids
- Offer solids from a spoon since eating from a spoon is a new skill for your baby
- Offer one new food at a time. You can combine the new food with another food your baby has tried before (e.g., chicken with sweet potatoes)
- Offer the new food 3-4 days in a row before trying another new food
- At first, solid foods can be offered pureed or well-mashed; however, most babies are ready for thicker textures quickly. Increase the texture as your baby gets older
- By eight months, most babies are ready to try finger foods (foods cut up in small pieces that your baby can pick up by themselves)

How much should my baby eat?

Let your baby be your guide in terms of how much they want to eat. Your baby will let you know when they are full by turning their head away, pushing the spoon away or closing their mouth.

As a general guide, start with a small amount of food at first, such as 2-3 teaspoons of dry cereal mixed with breastmilk or water or pureed meats or meat alternatives. You can then increase this amount as your baby shows they would like to eat more.

Expect a mess! Babies use their five senses when eating. This is how they discover colours, flavours, textures, sounds and have



fun — especially when foods fall on the floor!


Safety tips for feeding

Safety is important regardless of the type of food you are feeding your baby. The following are tips to follow to help your baby be safe while eating.

- Babies need to be watched while eating. Sometimes they gag on a new food, or new textures and this is normal. Your baby gags to avoid choking, but this is not choking
- Although any food can cause choking, some foods are more unsafe than others including:
 - Hard foods (e.g., raw carrots)
 - Small and round foods (e.g., grapes, olives)
 - Foods that are smooth or sticky (e.g., peanut butter on a spoon)
 - Foods with pits (e.g., olives, cherries)
 - Foods that are sharp or can be inhaled (e.g., nachos and popcorn)
- Do not give honey to your baby during the first year. Honey may contain the bacteria that can cause infant botulism.
- When opening a jar of baby food, make sure you hear the “popping” sound. If you do not hear the popping sound, return the jar to the store because it is unsafe to feed to your baby.
- Use a separate spoon to feed your baby. If you wish to taste your baby's food to check the temperature of the food, use a different spoon. Sharing spoons means sharing germs.
- Do not feed your baby solids from a bottle (e.g., put cereal in a bottle). It can be a choking hazard. In addition, there is no benefit in terms of your baby's development with this practice. Once a baby is six months, it is time to learn how to eat from a spoon (and their hands). Research also shows

babies do not sleep longer if cereal is put in the bottle.

- Feed your baby from a dish, not directly from the jar or original container. Throw out any food your baby doesn't eat at a sitting. The spoon will carry saliva and germs back to the food causing it to spoil
- You can store leftover baby food (store-bought or homemade) in the fridge at a temperature of 4°C (40°F) or lower for up to three days. After that time, you should throw it out
- It is not recommended to use a microwave to heat baby food as the food could be heated unevenly and cause burning. If you do use a microwave, make sure you mix the food thoroughly to ensure it is heated evenly
- A better way to warm baby food is to place a dish of baby food in a bath of warm water (double-boiler method)



Forcing your baby to eat or punishing them for not eating will lead to feeding problems.

Affection and comfort for your baby comes from you, not the food.

Food allergies

The latest research indicates there isn't a health benefit (e.g., reducing the risk of developing food allergies) by not offering highly allergic foods such as eggs, fish, peanut or nut products until a baby is much older. This means that once your baby is 6 months of age, all foods except for honey can be offered. This is even true for babies who have a family history of allergies.

In order to determine if your baby is allergic to a food, offer one new food at a time for 3-4 days in a row. Offer a new food earlier in the day so you have time to watch for any reactions. Reactions to a new food can be both right away or even delayed for a few hours.

Signs of an allergic reaction include: diarrhea, vomiting, skin rash or hives, swollen lips, tongue or face. Signs of a severe allergic reaction include breathing difficulty which needs immediate emergency help by calling 9-1-1.

If you notice one of these signs after feeding a food to your baby, stop feeding that food. Check with your baby's health care provider before re-introducing the food which caused the reaction.

If your baby does have a food allergy, make sure that anyone who takes care of your baby is aware of the allergy. Even a small amount of the allergic food can cause a reaction.

Babies need iron

Iron is important for your baby's growth and brain development. To make sure your baby gets enough iron, offer iron-rich foods as the first foods you offer your baby. This includes meat (beef, chicken, lamb, goat), eggs, beans, lentils or iron-fortified baby cereal.

Once your baby's first tooth has appeared, brush gently with a small, soft toothbrush at least twice a day.



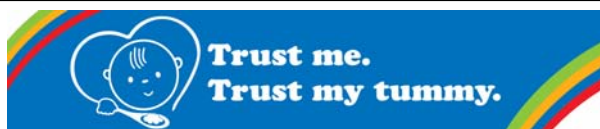
6 to 9 months

As you introduce solid foods to your baby, continue to offer each new food for 3-4 days in a row before starting a new food. Offer iron-rich foods daily, and as you add each new food, alternate between food groups.

Once you are offering iron rich foods, there is no particular order you must follow for introducing other foods. For example, you don't need to offer all vegetables before moving on to fruit. Offer your baby a variety of foods and don't be limited by your own likes and dislikes.

Even if you don't like butternut squash, chances are your baby might!

If you offer a food and your baby refuses to eat it, offer it again the following day without pressure. It may take several attempts before your baby accepts a new food. Be patient. Babies make a funny face when they are offered something new. This does not mean they don't like it, just that they realize it is new.



Since your baby knows how much they need to eat:

- You decide **what** foods to offer your baby to eat
- Trust your baby to decide **how much** they eat

Tips to helping your baby become a healthy eater:

- Create safe, pleasant and quiet mealtimes. Turn off the TV and don't distract your baby with toys. Don't pressure your baby to eat if they don't want to eat
- Make them part of mealtime. Seat your baby on your lap or in a highchair. This is an excellent chance for you to role model healthy eating and to connect with your baby
- Expect a mess! Babies learn about textures, tastes and colours by handling their food. Put a bib on your baby and cover the floor with a plastic sheet to help with cleaning up

When your baby starts picking up things with their fingers (somewhere around eight months of age), they are ready to try soft, small (bite-sized) foods. This is an exciting time for your baby to have more control in what they eat. This change in texture allows your baby to learn how to chew, even if they do not have teeth.

Foods for your baby do not need any added salt or sugar. Check for these ingredients in jarred baby foods and avoid the foods that include these ingredients. However, it is fine to add a little bit of spice (e.g., cinnamon) or herbs (e.g., basil) to your baby's food.

Grain Products

- Offer the single grain infant cereals, such as rice, barley and oatmeal, before starting mixed grain cereals. Be aware some single grain cereals have added milk solids or infant formula. This means a breastfed baby being introduced to a cereal with added milk solids or infant formula is being introduced to two new foods (the grain and the milk)
- Some infant cereals are also mixed with other foods, such as yogurt and fruit. Wait to offer these cereals until your baby has tried each of those foods on their own
- When your baby is about eight months old, you can offer pieces of toast, naan, well-cooked noodles, pita, rice, roti, steamed bun, O-shaped cereal and unsalted crackers

Meat and Alternatives

Meats and alternatives are a good source of iron and important for your baby.

- Offer chicken, beef, turkey, lamb, pork, fish
- Scrambled eggs
- Try alternatives such as mashed tofu and legumes (e.g., lentils or kidney beans)
- Begin with finely ground or mashed texture and progress to ground meats and then to small pieces of tender, moist meats

Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables and fruit can be offered anytime after six months; however, they are usually started once iron-rich foods have been offered.

- Vegetables for your baby should be cooked. Begin with finely mashed and slowly increase to soft cooked bite-size pieces

- All vegetables can be offered. You do not have to offer green vegetables before orange (or vice versa)
- There is no proof that offering vegetables before fruit will help your baby like vegetables more. To offer a variety of foods, mix between a vegetable and fruit when choosing a new food to introduce
- Offer your baby a variety of fruit, such as apples, apricots, avocado, banana, berries, cherries, orange, mango, melon, peaches, pears, and plums

Milk and Alternatives

Continue to breastfeed your baby based on their hunger cues, not on a set schedule.

- You can offer your baby cottage cheese, yogurt and cheese after six months. Once your baby is eating with their hands, you can offer grated cheese
- Cow's milk can be introduced between 9-12 months of age — and **only** when your baby is eating a variety of iron-rich foods
- Offer only full-fat, pasteurized milk products. This includes homogenized milk (3.25% milk fat) and full fat cheese, cottage cheese and yogurts
- Do not offer raw (unpasteurized) milk. It is not safe.

First year, first visit

Have your baby's teeth checked by a dentist or dental hygienist by one year of age.

Sample menus for Aryan (7½ months old)

Aryan is fed breastmilk before solid food. He is also breastfed in between meals and may wake for breastmilk at night.

	Day One	Day Two	Day Three
Morning	infant cereal	infant cereal and peaches	infant cereal
Afternoon	pureed chicken and squash	sweet potato and peas	pureed chicken and peas
Early Evening	infant cereal and applesauce	infant cereal	infant cereal and peaches



From 9 months

By nine months you've introduced solids and offered a variety of different foods, your baby is ready to start being more involved in the feeding process. This section answers questions parents have about offering finger foods and helping your baby learn to eat independently and helping your baby develop a healthy relationship with food.

Encourage your baby to feed themselves. Offer foods they can grasp and that are easy to chew. Place small pieces of food on your baby's high chair tray and let them select what they want to try. This is a learning process, so give them plenty of opportunities to practice.



Babies need more fat in their diet than adults do because they grow so fast. You should choose the full-fat version of foods for your baby (e.g., full-fat yogurts) until two years of age.

Avoid adding salt or sugar to your baby's food. However a little bit of spice (e.g., cinnamon) or herbs (e.g., basil) is fine. From 9-12 months, you will be helping your baby to shift to mostly table foods. Add the following foods to the food you have already introduced.

Grain Products

- Grain products, such as buns, bagels, pita, rice, noodles and pasta
- Cereals (e.g., o-shaped cereals) and unsalted crackers

Vegetables and Fruit

- Soft, cooked vegetables cut into bite-sized pieces
- Soft, ripe, peeled fresh fruit or canned fruit that is packed in water or juice
- Grapes cut into quarters
- Grated raw vegetables such as carrot or cucumber

Meat and Alternatives

- Small pieces of moist meat, chicken, beef, lamb, pork, fish, and tofu
- Scrambled eggs or cut up boiled egg
- Kidney beans, lentils and mashed chickpeas
- Avoid or limit the use of processed meats, like deli meats or hot dogs

Milk Products

- Full-fat cheese (shredded, grated or cut into small pieces)
- Full fat versions of yogurt, cottage cheese and ricotta
- Homogenized (3.25% M.F.) cow's milk may be offered once your baby is eating a variety of foods from the four food groups from *Canada's Food Guide*
- Offer milk in an open or sippy cup as part of a meal



Self-feeding is important at this age. Let your baby try eating with a spoon or fork (or their hands).

Don't expect them to get much food in their mouth at first. But they can have fun learning!

What should my baby drink?

In addition to breastmilk, or if not breastfeeding, formula, you can offer an open or sippy cup of water with meals.

Soy or rice beverages cannot replace the



calories or nutrients your baby gets from breastmilk or formula. It is not recommended to give these products to babies until after two years of age.

Soft drinks (pop), fruit drinks, sports drinks, coffee, tea or herbal teas, such as chamomile, are not suitable for a baby.

These drinks do not meet a baby's nutritional needs and can be dangerous to your baby's health.

Should I give my baby juice?

There is no need to offer your baby juice. Juice can fill your baby up, and does not contain the important nutrients that breastmilk provides.

If you choose to offer your baby juice after six months of age, offer no more than ¼-½ cup (60-125 mL) a day and only with meals. This will help ensure your baby is interested in eating at meal and snack times as well as drinks enough breastmilk or, if not breastfeeding, drinks enough iron-fortified formula.

From six months of age, you can help your baby learn to drink from a cup. If your baby is using a bottle, you should switch them to a cup by 12-15 months. By about 12 months of age, your baby will be able to drink homogenized milk, juice or water from a cup. Try to offer those drinks only at meals and snacks as this will help keep your baby's teeth healthy.

Choking Prevention

Babies and young children explore their world by putting things in their mouths. Although they have a strong gag and cough reflex, their small airways makes a blockage more likely.

Children under four years of age are at a higher risk of choking on food. Now your baby is feeding themselves (and likely putting more than just food in their mouths), you need to be aware of the choking hazards around your baby.

Review the safety tips on page five of this booklet and for more information visit www.york.ca/nutrition in the “Fact Sheet and Resources” section to see the fact sheet *Choking prevention tips*.

Sample menus for Sarah (10½ months old)

Sarah is eating a wider variety of foods and is feeding herself at most meals and snacks. Sarah continues to breastfeed on demand between meals and may wake to breastfeed at night. Sarah might play with (and occasionally take a sip) a sippy cup of water at some of her meals.

When preparing meals and snacks, offer soft foods cut into **½ to 1 cm** pieces. This way, it's big enough for little hands to grab but not big enough to be a choking hazard.



½ cm



1 cm



	Day One	Day Two	Day Three
Breakfast	infant cereal with cooked apricots	infant cereal mixed with chopped blueberries	pieces of pancake dipped in applesauce
Morning Snack	cottage cheese o-shaped cereal	small pieces of toast	cheese cubes
Lunch	mashed kidney beans small pieces of avocado	tofu pieces squash	infant cereal mixed with plain yogurt and prunes
Afternoon snack	grated cheese oatmeal muffin	banana pieces unsalted cracker	plain rice cake cooked green beans
Dinner	minced chicken sweet potatoes plain yogurt with mashed banana	grated cheese, soft cooked pasta, peas	brown rice grated carrot ground lamb

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I understand breastmilk is the most important part of my baby's diet and that I should breastfeed before giving my seven month old baby solids. When do I stop breastfeeding before meals?

In the first year of life breastmilk is the most important part of your baby's diet. However, most babies between 9-12 months of age begin to eat a wider variety of foods and decrease the amount or frequency they breastfeed. At this time you can try offering meals first and offer the breast after. By 12 months of age, babies should be eating 3 meals plus 2-3 snacks each day along with continued breastfeeding. If you are not breastfeeding, follow the same type of schedule as described above, offering iron-fortified formula.

2. My baby doesn't seem to like solids very much. What can I do to encourage her to eat more?

Introducing solid foods is a learning experience for both you and your baby! Some babies may be hesitant with all these new colours, textures, smells and tastes. Be patient and let your baby take the lead.

Forcing your baby to try new foods may only cause them to dislike these foods more. Continue to offer new foods, but if your baby refuses, don't panic. Try again the next day and if you are still not successful, try again in a week or two. You can offer a new food along with a food that she likes, but don't hide new foods — you don't want to turn her off the foods she already likes and babies need to experience new flavours.

Sometimes babies who enjoyed solids at six months of age begin to refuse to eat solids around 8-9 months of age. Often these babies don't want pureed textures anymore and are ready for soft bite-sized pieces of food they can feed themselves.

3. Can I give my 11 month old baby scrambled eggs?

Yes. The most current research available suggests that there is no health benefit to waiting to offer egg whites until one year of age. Babies can be offered whole eggs (e.g., scrambled eggs) or foods made with eggs (e.g, pancakes, breads) after six months of age. If you are concerned about your baby's risk for developing a food allergy or if your baby is experiencing signs and symptoms of allergy (e.g., eczema), speak to your baby's health care provider.

4. I'm afraid to let my nine month old baby eat anything but pureed foods. I think he might choke. Can't I just continue with pureed foods until he's older?

It is important to continue to offer your baby new and more challenging textures as they get older. If you wait too long to offer foods with texture, your baby may have a harder time accepting new textures and may have feeding problems, including having a hard time chewing new foods.

Babies can start with pureed foods, but by about seven months of age are ready for thicker, lumpier textures. By about eight months of age, they are ready for small pieces of food they can pick up themselves and may even show interest in feeding themselves. Continue to offer thicker and soft-cooked textures and encourage self feeding when your baby is interested.

Don't forget gagging is not the same as choking and your baby may gag with new textures. Gagging is a natural reaction to stop from choking. Try not to react strongly and get upset as this might upset your baby as well. Don't offer unsafe foods to your baby as discussed in this booklet, but do let them explore with new textures as they grow older and develop.

Where to find more information



Online: To learn more about nutrition and feeding your family visit us at www.york.ca/nutrition. You can access many informative [fact sheets and resources](#) on various topics, including:

- *Healthy eating while breastfeeding*
- *Vitamin D and your baby*
- *A guide to eating fish for women, children and families*
- *Feeding your vegetarian child*
- *Food allergies and your baby*
- *Constipation in babies and young children*
- *Finger foods*
- *Changing yuck to yum: 10 tips to help with mealtime struggles*
- *The ABCs of fruit juice*
- *Making your own baby food*
- *Feeding your toddler (12-36 months)*
- *Cooking up some fun (recipes for children)*
- *Snacks that make the grade*
- *Can food affect your child's behaviour?*
- *How to build a healthy preschooler*

Many of our fact sheets are available in multiple languages.

Other recommended websites:

- Dietitians of Canada - www.dietitians.ca
- EatRight Ontario – www.ontario.ca/eatright
- Ellyn Satter - www.ellynsatter.com
- Canadian Pediatric Society – www.caringforkidscps.ca



Phone: Ontario residents can speak to a registered dietitian at no cost by calling EatRight

Ontario at 1-800-510-5102. Thought of feeding or nutrition question during a 2 a.m. feed? Email your question at EatRight Ontario's website www.ontario.ca/eatright and a registered dietitian will respond to your question.

York Region Community and Health Services *Health Connection* is a free and confidential link to public health services and information. *Health Connection* can link you with breastfeeding supports, including appointments with the breastfeeding clinics, Healthy Babies Healthy Children programs and other parenting programs in the local community. Call *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653. (TTY 1-866-252-9933) or email HC@york.ca to connect with a public health nurse.



Books: Available at your local bookstore and library, here are a selection of our favourite books on feeding and

nutrition for babies and children.

- *Better Baby Food*. 2008. Authors: Daina Kalnins and Joanne Saab (Hospital for Sick Children)
- *Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense*. 2000. Author: Ellyn Satter
- *Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family*. 2008. Author: Ellyn Satter

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A Guide to Feeding Your Baby

Use this table as a guide for what types and textures of foods your baby is ready for. Print it out and post it on your fridge for a quick reference.

	At six months, begin to offer pureed or mashed	As baby gets older, offer....
Meat and Alternatives	All – the order you introduce them does not matter (e.g., beef, fish, poultry, beans, lentils, egg, tofu)	Finely minced Tofu pieces make great finger food
Baby Cereals	Start with iron fortified single grain infant cereals (e.g., rice, oat, barley, wheat)	Thicker infant cereals Mixed grain cereals (once all single grain cereals have been offered)
Vegetables	All — the order you introduce them does not matter	Mix with meats or cereal Move to mashed and then well cooked small pieces
Fruit	All — the order you introduce them does not matter	Mix with meats or cereals Move to mashed and then small pieces of soft and ripe fruits like banana, peaches and pears
Milk Products	All (e.g., cottage cheese, yogurt)	Plain yogurt mixed with mashed or soft-pieces of fruit Cottage Cheese Grated or finely chopped cheese
Homogenized (3.25%) Milk	Avoid	Homogenized milk between 9-12 months only if baby is eating a wide variety of foods Offer in an open cup or sippy cup
Water	Offer small amounts (e.g. 2 oz or 60 mL) Offer in an open cup or a sippy cup	Offer small amounts (e.g. 2 oz or 60 mL) Offer in an open cup or a sippy cup
Juice	Your baby does not need juice If you choose to give your baby juice, do not give more than ½ cup (4 oz or 125 mL) a day	
Other Advice	Avoid honey in the first year Avoid adding sugar or salt to your baby’s food.	