

OUR YOUNGEST PATIENTS

Babies are the best judge of how much food they need and their appetite may vary greatly day to day.

What do babies drink?

It is not recommended to give children under 6 months of age anything to drink besides breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula. After 6 months it is okay to start introducing a small amount of water after feedings. Hold off on any other fluids (including 100% fruit and vegetable juices) until 1 year of age.

AGE	DRINK	AMOUNT*
Up to 6 months	Breast milk (preferred) Iron-fortified infant formula	4-6 oz/feeding
6-12 months	Breast milk (preferred) Iron-fortified infant formula Plain unflavored water	4-8 oz/feeding Small amounts of water can be given after breast milk or formula.



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends exclusive consumption of breast milk for at least the first 4-6 months of life. Breastfeeding should still continue until 12 months of age or later.



*An infant may eat or drink more or less than what is listed here. Pay attention to signs of hunger and fullness and talk to your doctor if you're concerned about your infant's intake.

Signs of Hunger:

- Putting fists in mouth
- Rooting (when an infant opens her mouth and turns her head towards anything near the mouth)
- Excited arm and leg movements
- Sucking or smacking lips
- Aim to feed an infant before they get too upset and are crying from hunger (crying is a late hunger sign)

Signs of Fullness:

- Clamping lips together
- Turning head away
- Spitting out nipple
- Pushing away bottle
- Decreased or stopped sucking
- Milk dribbling out corner of mouth

Bottle Feeding Techniques:

- Put only breast milk or formula in the bottle. Do not put cereal, other food, juices, or other drinks in the bottle. Adding food to the bottle does NOT help infants sleep through the night. In fact, this practice makes it harder for the infant to recognize signs of fullness.
- Give the bottle to the baby at feeding time only, not nap time, and do not let the baby go to sleep with the bottle as it promotes overeating and tooth decay.
- Always hold the baby while feeding instead of propping the bottle in the baby's mouth. This will prevent overeating and tooth decay. Tip the bottle so that milk fills the nipple and air does not get in.
- Do not let the baby walk or crawl around with the bottle.
- Never force a baby to finish what is in the bottle. Babies are the best judge of how much they need. To avoid wasting breast milk or formula, start with a smaller amount and add more if the baby is still hungry.

Feeding Solid Foods

- Introduction of solids can begin as early as 4-6 months.
- Introduce one "single-ingredient" new food at a time and wait 3-5 days before introducing anything else to watch for possible allergic reactions.
- Choose foods that will provide key nutrients and help children meet their energy needs.

Recommended first foods include:

- Single-grain cereals, pureed vegetables and fruits, and pureed lean poultry or meats. You can make your own foods and thin them to a soupy consistency with breast milk or formula.
- Introduce a variety of foods by the end of the first year. Remember, when offering a new food, it may take up to 15 exposures until the child accepts the food, so keep trying!
- Avoid adding salt or any kind of sweetener. These are not necessary to make children like a food – this can be done by repeatedly introducing a food.

AGE	SOLID FOOD	AMOUNT*
Up to 4 months	No Solids Recommended	
4-8 months	Single-grain, iron-fortified cereal	Up to 3 Tbsp
	Fruits and/or vegetables	Up to 3 Tbsp
	Pureed lean poultry and meats	Up to 3 Tbsp
8-12 months	Single-grain, iron-fortified cereal	1-4 Tbsp
	Fruits and/or vegetables	1-4 Tbsp
	Lean poultry, meat, egg, cooked beans or peas	1-4 Tbsp
	Cottage cheese or yogurt	1-4 Tbsp
	Cheese	½ oz to 2 oz
	Bread	¼ to ½ slice
	Crackers	2 crackers

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Resources – 1) Nemours: Best Practices for Healthy Eating, 2) Team Nutrition Feeding Infants: Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs 3) American Academy of Pediatrics: Pediatric Nutrition Har fast food, they should look for healthy options.