Hunger and Fullness Cues

How can you tell if your baby is hungry? Learn how hunger and fullness signs change as babies grow.

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<th>Age</th>
<th>Hunger Signs</th>
<th>Fullness Signs</th>
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| **Birth through 5 months** | • Wakes and tosses  
• Sucks on fist  
• Cries or fusses  
• Opens mouth while feeding | • Seals lips together  
• Turns head away  
• Decreases or stops sucking  
• Spits out the nipple or falls asleep when full |
| **4 through 6 months** | • Cries or fusses  
• Smiles, gazes at caregiver, or coos during feeding  
• Moves head toward spoon or tries to swipe food towards mouth | • Decreases speed of sucking or stops sucking when full  
• Spits out the nipple  
• Turns head away  
• May be distracted or pay more attention to surroundings |
| **5 through 9 months** | • Reaches for spoon or food  
• Points to food | • Eating slows down  
• Pushes food away |
| **8 through 11 months** | • Reaches for food  
• Points to food  
• Gets excited when food is presented | • Clenches mouth shut or pushes food away |
| **10 through 12 months** | • Expresses desire for specific food with words or sounds | • Shakes head to say “no more” |
| **1 to 2 years** | • Combines phrases with gestures such as “want that” and pointing  
• Can lead parent to refrigerator and point to a desired food or drink | • Uses words like “all done” and “get down”  
• Plays with food or throws food when full |