

# What to Feed Babies Ages 0-6 Months

## What to feed

**Breast milk or iron-fortified formula:** Breast milk provides nearly all the nutrients needed for optimal growth and strengthens the baby's immune system. The composition of breast milk changes as babies grow to match their nutritional needs.

**Vitamin D supplement:** If your baby drinks only breast milk, give a daily supplement of vitamin D (400 IU), because levels of this vitamin in breast milk are very low.

### How much should I feed my baby?

Newborns take in about 1 to 2 ounces of infant formula/breast milk per feeding occasion during the first month of life.

This amount increases to about 2 to 3 ounces per feeding during the second month, and then gradually to 4 to 6 ounces per feeding by 5 months.

Pay attention to your baby's hunger and fullness signals and never pressure them to finish the bottle. They will stop when full; babies have a natural ability to control their appetite.

### When do I introduce solid food?

Look for these [key developmental signs](#): sitting alone or with support, head and neck control, chewing, and the ability to bring food to their mouth. When your baby can do all of these things, they are ready for solid food! This usually happens between 4 and 6 months.

If your baby pushes solids out with their tongue when food is offered, and/or gags when a spoon or food is placed in their mouth then they are not ready for solid foods.

When you introduce solid food, begin offering 1 to 2 teaspoons of a pureed or mashed food at each feeding occasion and slowly increase the amount. Wondering how much to feed? [Here are some suggested menus for babies.](#)



## What to avoid

**Milk:** Drinking dairy milk before 12 months may result in intestinal bleeding and serious health issues for your baby.

**Plant-based beverages:** Soy, rice, almond, and other plant-based milk alternatives are not recommended for babies in place of breast milk or infant formula. If the baby appears to have a dairy allergy or intolerance, breastfeeding mothers can remove dairy products from their diets and/or your pediatrician will work with you to find a suitable infant formula option.

**Honey:** Babies younger than 12 months should not be given any foods that contain raw or cooked honey. Honey may cause botulism, a serious illness.

**Fruit juice:** Drinking juice can discourage your baby from eating other nutritious food. Offer mashed fruits instead; they are more nutritious than juice.

**Sugary drinks:** Avoid soft drinks, sports drinks, fruit drinks, energy drinks, and sweetened teas.

**Cereal:** Do not add cereal to breast milk or formula in your baby's bottle. This will not help your baby sleep at night and may interfere with how well nutrients are absorbed from breast milk or infant formula.

Before choosing food for your baby, check the food label and ingredient list. Choose food with no or very low amounts of added sugars and sodium (salt).