

FEEDING YOUR INFANT

WHAT SHOULD I FEED MY BABY?

Breast milk

Breast milk is the best milk for your baby. If you breast feed, your baby will have less chance of...

- » Getting asthma or allergies
- » Getting sick with diarrhea or ear infections
- » Becoming overweight
- » Breastfeeding also helps your baby's brain development

Breastfeeding is also good for mothers! It helps you...

- » Lose the weight you gained in pregnancy
- » Lowers your chance of getting breast cancer

Formula

If you are unable or choose not to breastfeed, you should give your baby iron-fortified infant formula. Try mixing small amounts of formula at a time; you can make more if your baby is still hungry.



Whatever you choose - breastfeeding or formula feeding - your baby will enjoy the closeness and comfort of feeding time!

Infants are not yet ready for the following:

- Cow's milk (until 12 months of age)
- Juice (until at least 6 months of age)
- Additional water (unless directed by a doctor)
- Solid foods (until around 6 months of age or unless directed by a doctor) or cereal in a bottle
 - » From 0 to 6 months old, babies get all the nutrients they need from breastmilk or formula.
 - » Infant tummies are not mature enough for other foods and beverages.
 - » Unless directed by a doctor, you should wait until your infant is 6 months old before feeding him or her solid foods.



FEEDING YOUR INFANT

How should I feed my baby?

- Pay attention to your baby's cues and feed him or her when he or she shows signs of being hungry.
- Feed your baby when he or she is calm and awake and before he or she gets upset and starts crying.
- Let your baby eat as much as he or she wants - a little or a lot, fast or slow, steady or start-and-stop.
- Stop feeding when your baby shows signs of being full.
- Talk or play awhile after feeding. Put him or her to bed when he or she is calm and drowsy and let him or her put himself or herself to sleep.

Signs your baby may be hungry:

- » Putting fists in mouth
- » Sucking or smacking lips
- » Rooting (when an infant opens his or her mouth and turns toward the breast or bottle)

Signs your baby may be full:

- » Slows down or stops sucking
- » Clamping lips together
- » Turning head away
- » Spitting out nipple
- » Pushing away from the breast or bottle
- » Dribbling out of the corner of mouth
- » Falls asleep while feeding

**Remember that crying does not always mean your baby is hungry!
Try to calm your baby before feeding.**

These tips can help your infant grow up to be a healthy eater!

- Learn how your baby shows you he or she is hungry or full, so you give the right amount of food.
- Never restrict infants to a meal schedule! Instead, feed them when they show hunger cues.
- Let infants eat their way. Fast, slow, steady, start-and-stop, much or little.
- Never force an infant to keep eating after he or she is full! Instead, stop feeding your baby when he or she show signs of being full.
- Babies do not need to eat for a certain amount of time nor do they always need to finish their bottle.

