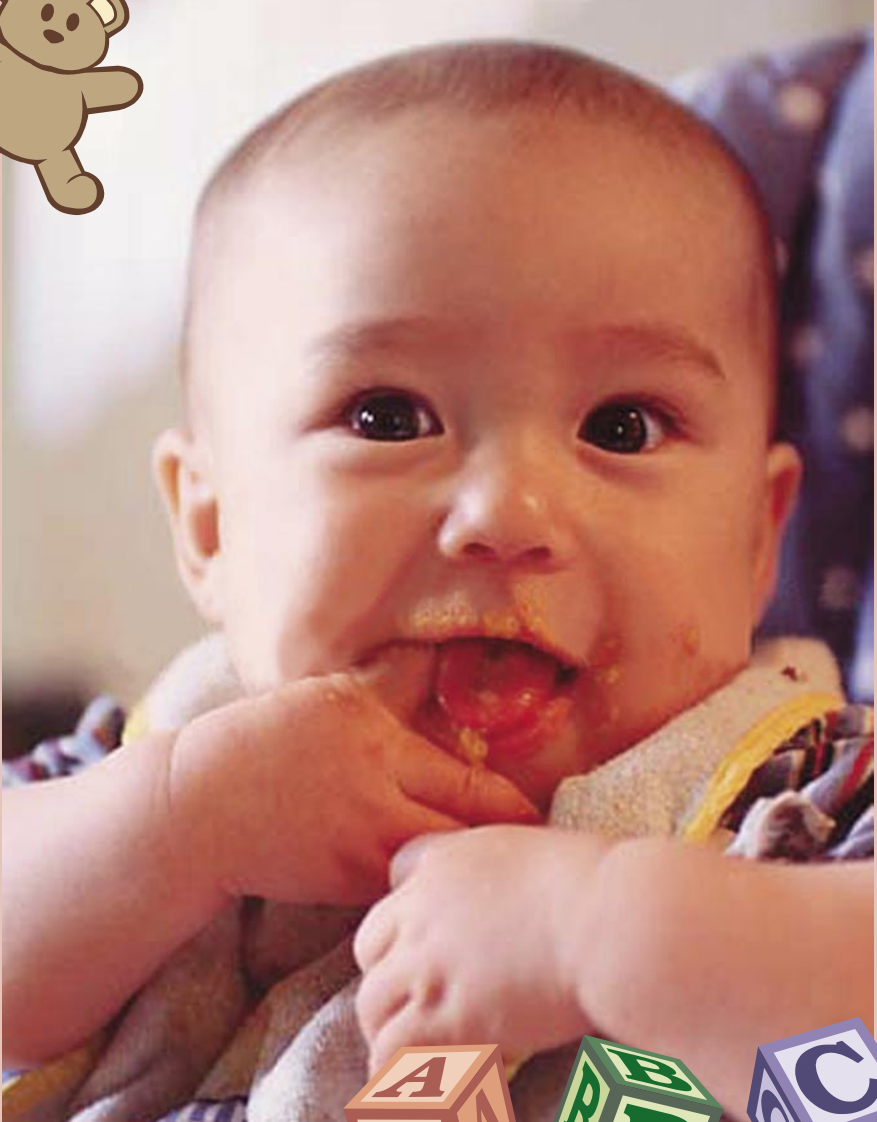


My Baby's First Food





At Birth

Breastfeeding is ideal for your baby and you. It is the most natural way to feed your baby.

Start to breastfeed your baby soon after birth, preferably within 6-12 hours. The earlier you start breastfeeding, the earlier your milk will start flowing.



Frequent suckling of the newborn helps to:

- **stimulate milk production**
- **increase your confidence in breastfeeding your baby**
- **reduce discomfort from breast engorgement (breast swelling)**
- **reduce the likelihood of sore nipples.**



After a month or two, breastfeed your baby once every 3-4 hours.

Bring your baby to the paediatrician or polyclinic once a month to check that he is growing well.

Currently, the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months. But if you are unable to breastfeed, you can give your baby formula feeds. For the different types of formula feed available, please consult your paediatrician, dietitian or polyclinic nurse.

At 6 Months



For the first 6 months, milk alone is adequate. When your baby passes 6 months of age, he will need other food besides milk to meet his rapid growth needs. However, you should continue to give milk (breast milk or formula) to your baby as milk is still an important part of his diet.



Every baby is different and age is just a guideline. You should look for the following signs and then consult your paediatrician, dietitian or polyclinic nurse to see if your baby is ready for solid food:

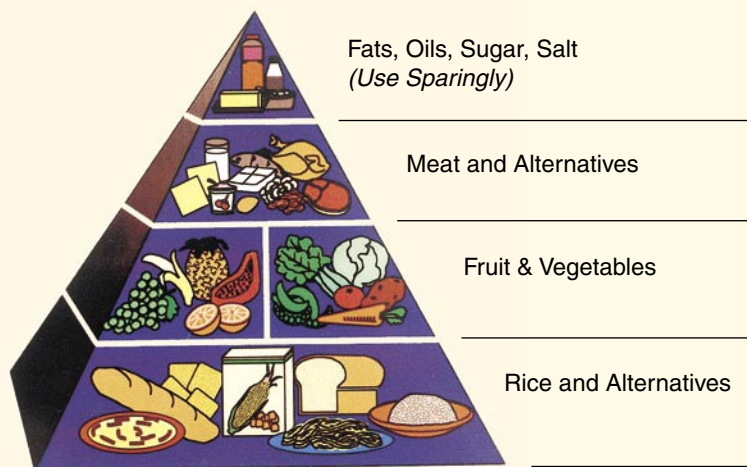
- Your baby can sit with little support.
- Your baby is able to use his tongue to move from the front to the back of the mouth.
- Your baby reaches for and shows interest in food you are eating.

Solid food is given to:

- increase energy intake
- supply nutrients, especially protein, iron, zinc and vitamin A
- introduce food of varying tastes, textures and consistencies.



What Food to Give



The Healthy Diet Pyramid

Start by introducing food from the Rice & Alternatives Group, then the Fruit Group and Vegetable Group, followed by the Meat & Alternatives Group.

Introduce one new food every 3-4 days with the aim of giving your baby food from all the basic food groups eventually.

Do not add salt, monosodium glutamate (MSG) or sugar (including honey) to your baby's food until he is 10 months old. Thereafter, only add them in food sparingly. Let your baby enjoy the natural flavours of food. Plain water can be given in between or after meals.

What drinks to give

Do not give sweetened drinks like syrups or glucose water which may cause dental caries and encourage your baby to develop a sweet tooth.



How to Prepare the Food

Prepare each meal just before feeding. If you wish to prepare food for your baby to be used later in the day, refrigerate the food and reheat thoroughly till it is boiling hot, after which cool it before feeding.

For a **6-month**-old baby, food should be smooth, soft and fine in texture. You may mash and sieve through, puree or scrape the food with a spoon.



For a **7 to 9-month**-old baby, food should be thicker and coarser as baby starts teething. You may scrape or mash the food.



For a **10 to 12-month**-old baby, food need only be mashed, chopped or cut into small pieces.



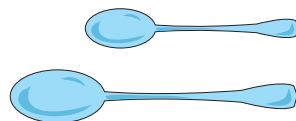


What to Give and How Much

Choose some food from each food group everyday		Amount for One Day		
		6-month-old baby	7 to 9-month-old baby	10 to 12-month-old baby
Milk	Breastmilk or infant formula	Breastfeed on demand or give 4-5 formula feeds (180-210 ml each)	Breastfeed on demand or give 3-4 formula feeds (210-240 ml each)	Breastfeed on demand or give 3 formula feeds (210-240 ml each)
Rice & Alternatives	Iron-fortified infant cereal (dry) Unmilled rice flour Teething food (Bread, rusk) Rice Potato	3 dsp cereal, add water or milk (start with rice cereal) 3 dsp riceflour, cook into gruel or ½-1 egg-sized potato, boil or mash	1 bowl cereal (give a variety) or ½ -1 slice bread (tear/cut into pieces) or 1 bowl thin rice porridge or 2 egg-sized potatoes, boil or bake & mash	1-2 slices bread (tear into pieces) or 1-2 bowls thick rice porridge or 2-3 egg-sized potatoes, boil or bake & cut into small pieces
Meat & Alternatives	Egg Dried beans Meat, liver Fish Beancurd	1 egg, hard-boiled, use mashed yolk only 2 tsp dried beans, grind into powder & cook into smooth paste 1 dsp fish, cook/bake & mash	1 egg hard-boiled, yolk only 1-2 dsp dried beans, boil & mash 1-2 dsp meat/liver, scrape & cook 1-2 dsp fish, cook/bake & mash ¼-½ cake beancurd, mash & cook } Choose any two	1 egg yolk only, cook in any way 2 dsp dried beans, boil & mash 2-3 dsp meat/liver, chop & cook 2-3 dsp fish, cook & mince/chop finely ½-¾ cake beancurd, chop roughly & cook } Choose any two
Fruit & Vegetables	Vitamin C-rich fruit (eg. orange, papaya, mango) Other fruit (eg. banana, pear) Green leafy vegetables (eg. spinach) Red/orange/yellow vegetables (eg. carrot, pumpkin)	3 tsp fruit juice 2 tsp fruit, scrape or mash 2 tsp vegetables, boil & sieve/puree 2 tsp vegetables, boil & sieve/puree	6 tsp fruit juice or 3 tsp fruit, scrape or mash 4 tsp fruit, scrape or mash 4 tsp vegetables, boil & mash 4 tsp vegetables, boil & mash	½ small fruit, cut into small pieces or 2 oz juice ½ small fruit, cut into small pieces 4-6 tsp vegetables, tear into small pieces & cook 4-6 tsp vegetables, cut into small pieces & cook



Breastmilk is best. If unable to breastfeed, use infant formula.



One Teaspoon (tsp) = 5 ml

One Dessertspoon (dsp) = 10 ml

Note: The above food are to be given in addition to milk. The amounts stated are for the whole day and serve as guideline for your child's requirement.



Sample Menu for a 6-Month-Old Baby

Morning

6 am

180 - 210 ml milk

9 am

½ - 1 egg yolk (hard-boiled)

120 ml milk

3 dsp dry rice cereal

} Combine these ingredients together

or

2 tsp beans, grind into powder

3 dsp unmilled rice, cooked into gruel

} Combine these ingredients together

1 tsp scraped banana

Few tsp water

Afternoon

12 pm

180 - 210 ml milk

3 tsp juice

3 pm

180 - 210 ml milk

Evening

6 pm

3 dsp unmilled rice gruel

1 dsp fish, cook & mash or

2 tsp beans, grind into powder

2 tsp sieved spinach

1 - 2 tsp scraped papaya

Few tsp water

} Combine these ingredients together

9 pm

180 - 210 ml milk

(some babies may need a milk feed at night)

Sample Menu for a 7 to 9-Month-Old Baby



Morning

6 am

210 - 240 ml milk

9 am

½ bowl infant cereal

120 ml milk

1 hard-boiled egg yolk

Few tsp water

} Combine these ingredients together

Afternoon

12 pm

½ bowl thin porridge

1 dsp mashed kangkong

1 dsp scraped meat

4 tsp scraped papaya

Few tsp water

} Combine these ingredients together

3 pm

210 - 240 ml milk

Evening

6 pm

1 mashed potato

1 dsp mashed carrot

1 dsp mashed baked fish

Few tsp water

4 tsp scraped banana

9 pm

210 - 240 ml milk



Sample Menu for a 10 to 12-Month-Old

Morning

6 am

210 - 240 ml milk

9 am

1 hard-boiled egg yolk

1 slice bread

120 ml milk

Few tsp water

Afternoon

12 pm

½ - 1 bowl thick porridge

1 - 2 dsp small pieces of chye sim

½-¾ cake soft beancurd, mashed

½ dsp chopped liver

2 dsp watermelon, cut into small pieces

Few tsp water

} Combine these ingredients together

3 pm

210 - 240 ml milk

1 teething rusk/baby biscuit

Few tsp water

Evening

6 pm

½ - 1 bowl thick porridge

1 - 2 dsp pumpkin

1 - 2 dsp minced chicken

2 dsp papaya

Few tsp water

} Combine these ingredients together

9 pm

210 - 240 ml milk



How to Feed & Introduce New Food



- Introduce a new food by giving only $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful. Feed your baby using the tip of the spoon and let him suck the food.
- Give only one new food at a time and observe how your baby reacts for a few days before you introduce another food.
- If your baby has loose stools or develops a skin rash, you should stop giving the last newly-introduced food. Bring your baby to see your family doctor or a paediatrician.
- Increase the amount and the variety of new food slowly.
- Give the new food before a milk feed while your baby is hungry.
- If your baby likes a new food, give it to him more often.
- Do not force your baby to eat or finish his food.
- Allow your baby to handle the spoon and bowl. Encourage him to feed himself even if this means eating with his fingers.
- Make eating enjoyable for your baby.