

# Feed Me!



# What foods do I want?

## Smooth, Mashed, Lumpy, Chopped, and Finger Foods

I'm now about 6 months old. I can sit on my own and hold my head steady. I am ready to try some solid foods.

- I am learning how to chew and swallow.
- Start me off slowly with small amounts of pureed (smooth) or mashed foods.
- Let me explore the foods' tastes and textures.
- Keep an eye on me so I do not choke.

I will quickly learn how to use my hands and fingers to eat. Encourage me to feed myself and let me hold a spoon. As I get older, I will like foods with more texture. I'll be ready for:

- Mashed foods with some lumps and soft finger foods around 7 to 8 months.
- Minced, chopped and some firmer finger foods around 8 to 12 months.



**Keep feeding me breastmilk or formula. It is my main source of nutrition.**



**My first foods should be high in iron and zinc.**

**I'm **NOT** ready for these foods.**

- Cow or goat milk until I am 1 year
- Plant based milks (soy, rice, pea, coconut, almond)
- Fruit juice, sugar sweetened beverages, teas
- Foods with added sugars and salt
- Foods that may cause choking such as nuts, grapes, popcorn, hot dogs and hard candies
- Honey

**Give me a variety of foods.**

- My first foods should be high in iron and zinc, especially if I am fully breastfed. Try fortified baby cereal or pureed meats, poultry, fish, cooked eggs and beans.
  - The more veggies you give me now, the more I will eat when I am older.
  - By 7 to 8 months, offer me a variety of foods from all the food groups.
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**The more veggies you give me now, the more I will eat when I am older.**

- I like my foods plain. I do not need salt, sugar, or soy sauce. Small amounts of oils (healthy fats) are okay.
- Sometimes, it may take me more than 10 times to get familiar with a food and like it. Try giving me new foods with foods I already like.
- I want to start using a cup. Offer me water in a cup a few times a day starting when I am 6 months. By 12 months I want to be using cups, not bottles.
- Around 9 to 12 months, I might like small pieces of peeled soft fruits and vegetables, cooked ground meat, dry cereal, toasted bread squares, soft tortilla, sliced cheese, and pasta.



## How Much and How Often Do I Want to Eat?

It is important to watch for my signals and respond. I will let you know when I am hungry and when I am full. Offer me healthy foods. Please do not make me eat more than I want.

- When I am hungry, I open my mouth when the spoon gets near, reach for the spoon or food, and get excited when I see the food.
- When I am full, I may shake my head, turn my head away from the food, keep my mouth closed when the spoon is close, and push the food away.
- In the beginning, I just want to try foods. Offer me foods one or two times each day. Start with one to two teaspoons and slowly increase the amount as I show you I am hungry.
- It is important for me to enjoy mealtimes; do not worry about how much I eat. Keep my portions small. My tummy is about the size of my fist.
- Around 7 to 8 months, I may eat 3 to 4 small meals a day and 1 to 2 snacks.



## Meals: 6 to 12 months

Here are some ideas for how much to offer me each day. These amounts are just a suggestion as I grow from 6 months to 12 months.

### For each meal—breakfast, lunch, and dinner offer me:

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- Breastmilk or formula,  
**and**
- Up to 4 tablespoons meat, eggs, beans **or**
- Up to 4 tablespoons, infant cereal **or**
- Up to 4 ounces cottage cheese, **or**
- Up to 2 ounces cheese, **or**
- Up to 4 ounces yogurt  
**and**
- Up to 2 tablespoons vegetables, fruits or combination

### For snacks (morning and afternoon) offer me:

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- Breastmilk or formula,  
**and**
- Up to ½ slice whole grain bread/toast, **or**
- Up to 2 whole grain crackers, **or**
- Up to 4 tablespoons infant cereal  
**and**
- Up to 2 tablespoons vegetables, fruits or combination

What could you offer me? I am \_\_\_\_\_ months old.

**Breakfast:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Snack:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Lunch:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Snack:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

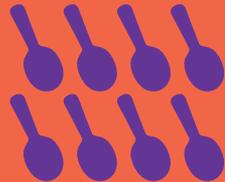
**Dinner:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Hint:**

4 ounce  
container  
of baby food  
equals 8  
tablespoons.



# I'm Watching and Learning from You

- Show me you like many different foods. When your face shows you don't like something, I think I should not like it.
- When I point at a food, I may be asking "What's that?" It does not always mean I want to eat the food.
- Talk to me at meal times. Tell me about the foods I am eating. Tell me about your day.
- Turn off the television, computer, and phone. Focus on me and our mealtime.
- I love to be with people. Let's eat together. I learn so much from watching and listening to all the people around me.
- Offer me healthy foods similar to what you are eating. I do not need sugary or salty foods.



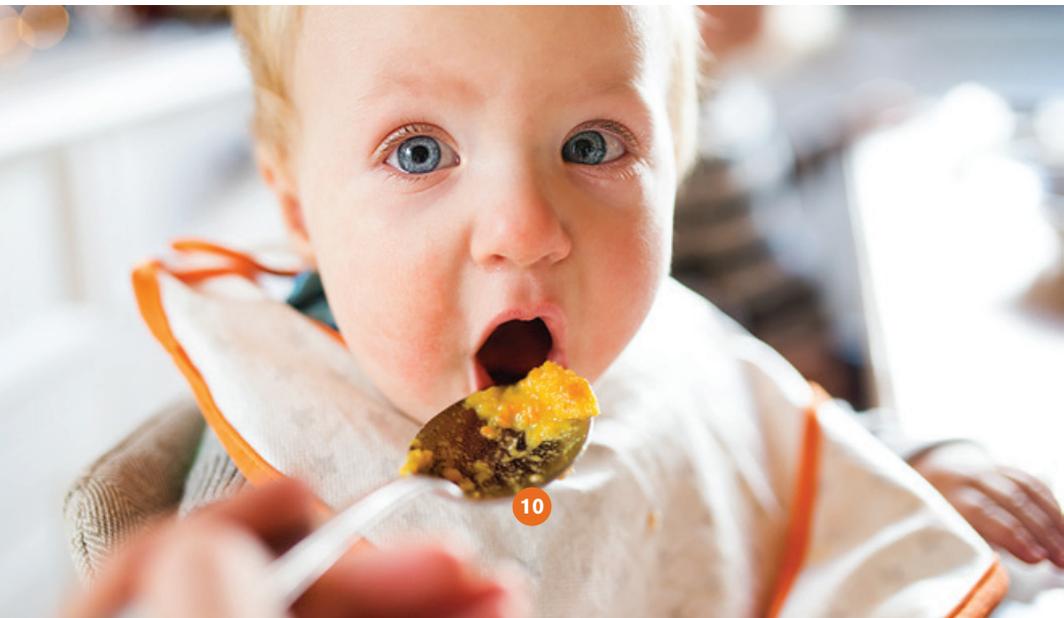


## Why I May Not Want to Eat Sometimes

- I am not growing as fast, so I may not eat as much. Sometimes I am just not hungry.
- I am getting better at remembering things, including the foods I like best. I may not want to eat a new food. Be patient. Keep trying.
- I like routines. When things change, I may get cranky and not want to eat. I do better when I know what to expect at mealtime.
- I like to use my fingers to learn. It is fun but can be messy. I may get frustrated if you try to be too neat and not let me explore.
- I need to have active time throughout the day to use my energy and practice all my new skills—crawling, walking, and standing. When I do not get enough active play, it may be hard for me to sit still and eat.
- I may be distracted by things around me and not want to focus on eating.

# What about Allergies?

- Introduce me to one new food at a time. There is no particular order. Wait three to five days between each new food to make sure I am not allergic.
- Foods that I might be allergic to include milk, egg, peanut, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish and shellfish. Introduce these foods after I have tried other solid foods and am doing well. Watch me carefully for signs of an allergic reaction. If either of my parents have allergies, talk to my health care professional before introducing me to these foods.
- Allergic reactions include skin rashes, hives, coughing and wheezing, respiratory symptoms, ear infections, abdominal pain, loose stools, gas, or vomiting. Stop feeding me any food that causes me to have a bad reaction and contact my health care professional.



## How to Introduce Peanut Products

Once I am doing well on solid foods, you can introduce me to some peanut products. Trying peanut products as an infant may help me not have peanut allergy as I grow older.



1

### **I do not have any eczema (red, itchy skin) or food allergies.**

I can try peanut products. Choose foods that I can chew and swallow well such as pureed fruits or vegetables with a little creamy peanut butter stirred in.

2

### **I have mild to moderate eczema.**

I may have more of a chance of having a peanut allergy. Try a little peanut product at home. Watch me carefully. Call my health care professional if I have any bad reactions.

3

### **I have severe eczema or egg allergy.**

Check with my health care professional. Ask about how to introduce me to peanut products.



## Keep Me Safe and Healthy

- Wash your hands before preparing or touching my food. Wash my hands too. Germs could make me sick.
- Do not feed me from the baby food container; put my food in a dish. Germs from my mouth can spoil any leftover food.
- Throw away any food left in my dish, and breastmilk or formula left in my cup or bottle. You can keep my opened baby food container in the refrigerator for 2 days.
- Brush my teeth with a small soft toothbrush and a tiny smear of fluoride toothpaste (the size of a grain of rice) twice a day. Ask my doctor if I need fluoride drops.
- Take me to my health care professional at 6, 9, and 12 months for my checkups and shots.
- Keep me away from smoke; it causes health problems.
- Let me explore and learn; make each room safe for me.
- Never put me to bed with a bottle. I could choke, get an earache, or ruin my teeth.

# Swirl It, Spoon It, Spread It

## WIC Participants Share Ideas for Using Baby Food

### **Veggie Bonus**

Stir vegetable baby food puree into soups, stews, meat loafs, or vegetables.

### **Pasta Sauce**

Add vegetable baby food puree to pasta sauce and serve over pasta.

### **Fruit Spread**

Spread fruit or vegetable baby food puree on whole grain toast, crackers, pancakes, or pita bread.

### **Mix-In**

Stir vegetable or fruit baby food puree into batters for pancakes, muffins, or quick breads.

### **Fruit Swirl**

Swirl fruit baby food puree into plain yogurt, hot cereal, or cottage cheese.





## Dipping Sauce

Spoon vegetable or fruit baby food puree into a small bowl and use as a dipping sauce for finger foods: soft veggie or fruit sticks, chicken strips or toast triangles.

## Frozen Fruit

Blend together fruit baby food puree, plain yogurt, and mashed fresh or frozen fruits. Spoon into ice cube trays or ice pop molds and freeze.

# Recipe

## Easy Baby Pancakes

Easy Baby Pancakes are made with baby cereals and baby foods. Try pureed apricots, bananas, squash, pumpkin or a combo. Pancakes are yummy for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snack.

### Tips:

- Leftovers may be frozen.
- Spread pancakes with yogurt, baby fruit puree, or peanut butter instead of syrup.

## Ingredients:

- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup uncooked baby cereal
- ½ cup uncooked baby oatmeal cereal
- 1¼ cups breastmilk or formula (or another liquid such as cow's milk)
- ½ cup mashed banana or pureed baby food
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 3 eggs
- Dash of cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla or other flavorings, optional

## Directions:

Combine flours and cereals in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together milk, pureed baby food, oil and eggs. Pour milk mixture into flour mixture; stir just until blended.

Heat a large heavy skillet over medium heat. Drop batter by tablespoonfuls into skillet and cook about 2 minutes on each side. Makes about 24 pancakes.





**California Department of Public Health  
California WIC Program**

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