



# Feeding Your Baby Solid Foods

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Region of Waterloo  
PUBLIC HEALTH AND  
EMERGENCY SERVICES

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# Feeding Your Baby Solid Foods

This resource gives general information for feeding healthy term babies from six months to one year. For more information about starting solids, contact EatRight Ontario at 1-877-510-5102 to talk to a Registered Dietitian, or go to [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca).

Talk to your health care provider before starting solid foods when: your baby has eczema or a diagnosed allergy; if there is a parent, sister or brother with an allergic condition such as food allergy, eczema, asthma or hay fever; or if you have any concerns about starting solids.

## When to Start Solid Foods

For the first six months of life, breast milk is the only food your baby needs. Babies go through several growth spurts in the first six months of life. When your baby is going through a growth spurt, they are growing more quickly and may be hungrier than usual; breastfeed your baby more often.

When your baby is six months of age and showing signs of readiness, you can start to offer solid foods in addition to breast milk.

## Signs That Your Baby is Ready to Try Solid Foods

Let your baby be your guide to when it is time to start solid foods. It may be time to start solid foods when your baby:

- Sits in a high chair and controls their head well
- Shows interest in food when others are eating
- Watches the spoon and opens their mouth when the spoon comes close
- Closes their lips over the spoon and swallows food in their mouth
- Turns their body or head away when full

If solid foods are started too soon or too late, there is a greater chance of problems.



Solid Foods Started Too Early	Solid Foods Started Too Late
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baby may not get enough breast milk</li><li>• May cause your baby to choke</li><li>• Hard on baby's kidneys and digestive system</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Baby may be slow to accept solid food</li><li>• Baby may have a hard time chewing food</li><li>• Baby may not get all the nutrients they need</li></ul>

**TIP:** Starting solids before six months will not help a baby sleep through the night. Every baby is different; it may be many months before your baby sleeps through the night.

# Starting Solid Foods

At six months, breast milk is still the most important food for your baby. Continue to breastfeed before or after offering solid foods, according to your baby's hunger cues and your convenience.

- Offer the same nutritious food as the rest of the family, with changes to make it safe for baby.
- Offer food prepared with little or no added salt, sugar or other sweeteners.
- Prepare food with little or no seasoning so your baby learns the natural taste of food.
- Offer healthy, higher fat foods; they provide energy and are important for brain development.

Offer your baby **a variety of soft textures** by spoon including tender-cooked and finely minced, puréed, mashed or ground. Many babies can handle lumpy textures at six months. Your baby should be eating lumpy textures by nine months of age.

Offer finger foods starting at six months. Even if your baby does not have teeth, they can learn how to chew. At first, finger food is food that is cut into pieces big enough for your baby to hold in their fist with the top sticking up, such as bread crusts and dry toast; soft cooked vegetables and fruit; and soft ripe fruit such as banana.

When your baby is able to pick up food with their fingers and thumb, they may also eat: cooked meat and meat alternatives cut into small pieces; diced cooked vegetables or soft ripe fruit; and grated cheese.

At 12 months of age, your baby should be eating the same foods as the family at regular meal and snack times. Continue to prepare family foods so they are safe for your child to eat.



## Tips for Feeding Your Baby Solid Foods

- Clean your baby's hands before offering them food.
- Feed your baby in a sitting position facing you, such as in a high chair with safety straps.
- Put a small amount of food on the tip of a small spoon; hold it so your baby can see it.
- Wait for your baby to open their mouth before trying to feed them.
- Wait until they swallow before offering more; feed as quickly or as slowly as your baby wants.
- Stop feeding when your baby turns their head away, pushes the food away or closes their lips.
- It is important to keep feeding time happy. If your baby does not like the taste of a food, try again on another day. Do not force your baby to eat.
- Offer food in a quiet place. Turn off the radio and TV and don't allow toys at the table.
- Make meal times enjoyable and talk to your baby.
- Be a good role model – eat with your baby.
- Put the high chair close to the family table and let your baby join the family for meals.
- Allow your baby to touch their food – it is part of learning how to feed themselves.
- Give your baby a small spoon if they reach for yours.
- Be prepared for a mess. Put a bib on your baby and use a cloth under the high chair to catch food.



Always stay and watch your baby when they are eating.

**TIP:** After every feeding, use a clean cloth to wipe your baby's gums. As soon as teeth appear, brush them twice a day using a soft baby toothbrush and water – no toothpaste. It is important to brush your baby's teeth before they go to sleep at night.

# How Much Do I Feed My Baby?

Let your baby be your guide to how much to feed. Some days your baby will want to eat more or less than other days.

At first your baby will take only a small amount of food at a time. This amount will gradually increase as your baby has a bigger appetite. Your baby's growth is a good sign that your baby is getting enough to eat. Talk to your health care provider if you are concerned about your baby's growth.

## Responsive Feeding

Continue to breastfeed according to your baby's **hunger and fullness** cues while gradually introducing solid foods, according to your baby's appetite:

- When you start feeding solids, your baby may show they are hungry by being excited, reaching for the food or spoon, leaning forward and by opening their mouth for the food.
- Start by offering a small amount of iron-rich food every day.
- Gradually increase the number of times a day you offer solid foods as your baby gets older and their appetite changes. Between nine and 12 months of age your baby may be having up to three meals and two snacks a day.
- Babies lose interest in eating when they have had enough to eat.
- Your baby will let you know they have had enough by turning their head away, pushing the food away, or by closing their lips together.
- Do not coax, play games, pressure or force your child to eat.



Trust that your baby will eat the right amount of food.

It is the adult's job to decide:	It is the child's job to decide:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What food to offer</li><li>• When to offer solid food</li><li>• Where to offer solid food</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whether or not to eat a food</li><li>• How much food to eat</li></ul>

**TIP:** As a parent it is your job to offer nutritious foods that your baby can safely eat. Trust your baby to decide what and how much to eat from the food you offer.

# First Foods - Iron-Rich Foods at Six Months

Meat, meat alternatives and infant cereals with added iron should be the first foods offered to your baby, as they are good sources of iron and your baby's body needs more iron at this age. Iron from meat sources is better absorbed than iron from non-meat sources. Between six and 12 months of age offer iron-rich foods two or more times a day.

## Meat and Meat Alternatives

These foods include cooked turkey, beef, chicken, lamb and pork; well-cooked eggs; cooked fish (with no bones); cooked legumes (chickpeas, lentils, beans) and cooked tofu.

- Start with soft, tender cooked and finely minced, puréed, mashed or ground meat and meat alternatives and change to lumpier textures as soon as your baby is able to manage.
- Avoid offering your baby processed luncheon/deli meats, wieners (hot dogs), sausages, bacon and packaged meats high in fat and salt.



**TIP:** Baby food “dinners” sold in jars are low in meat. It is better to buy meats and vegetables separately and mix them yourself or to make your own baby food.

## Iron-Fortified Infant Cereal

- Start with a single grain infant cereal with added iron such as barley, rice, oatmeal or wheat.
- Use mixed grain cereals after your baby has tried all the single grain cereals on their own.
- Choose plain infant cereals. Cereals with added fruits have extra sugar.
- Mix dry infant cereal with breast milk or water (follow the instructions on the package).
- Add the amount of liquid to the dry cereal to make the thickness that is right for your baby; add less liquid to make the cereal thicker as your baby gets better at eating.



**TIP:** Give infant cereal to your baby on a small spoon; do not add it to something that they will drink.

## Next Foods - After Iron-Rich Foods

Once your baby is eating a variety of iron-rich foods you can start to offer other foods in no special order except for:

- Fluid cow's milk - wait until your baby is nine to 12 months of age and eating a variety of foods, including iron-rich foods every day, before offering this as a beverage (see Milk and Milk Alternatives section).
- Honey - do not give honey for the first year of life due to risk of food poisoning (botulism), or other foods that may cause food poisoning (see How to Avoid Food Poisoning section).
- Prepare food according to your baby's stage of development to lower your baby's risk of choking.

## Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables and fruit are good sources of vitamins, minerals and fibre and add colour, variety and texture to your baby's diet. Infants and young children who are offered a wide variety of vegetables and fruit are more likely to eat them when they are older.

- The vitamin C in vegetables and fruit help your baby to absorb the iron in foods. Offer vegetables and fruit with non-meat sources of iron such as meat alternatives and infant cereal.
- You do not need to avoid offering any type of vegetable or fruit. At first you may want to offer mild tasting vegetables and fruit like carrots, green beans, peas, squash, sweet potatoes, peaches, avocado, pears and bananas.
- Wash and cook hard vegetables and fruit; remove peel, seeds and pits.
- Start with soft-cooked vegetables and fruit and soft, ripe fruit such as banana in a variety of textures such as mashed, puréed, lumpy and as finger foods.
- Your baby does not need fruit juice. It is better to offer water for thirst between meals and snacks and fruit for fibre. If you choose to offer fruit juice, offer pasteurized 100% fruit juice (with no added sugar) in an open cup at a meal or snack, and limit to 125 mL (½ cup) a day. Do not give juice in a bottle or 'sippy' cup. Sucking on these over time increases exposure of the teeth to sugar in juice and can lead to tooth decay/cavities.



**TIP:** Store-bought baby fruit “desserts” have added sugar; offer fruit prepared safely for your baby, instead.



## Grain Products (includes products such as breads, pasta, rice, cereals and crackers)

- Continue to offer iron-fortified infant cereal up to and beyond 12 months of age, as it is a good source of iron.
- Choose and prepare grain products for your baby's stage of development. Try to make at least half of the grain products you offer each day, 'whole grain' products.
- At six months of age many babies are able to hold and eat finger foods, such as toast and bread crusts cut into strips.
- As your baby gets better at eating, you may try offering: soft-cooked pasta (noodles) cut into small pieces; cooked sticky rice; small pieces of bagel, whole grain bread, roti, or flat bread; unsalted crackers; home-made muffins; and dry unsweetened cereal such as 'O' shaped oat cereal.



**TIP:** Avoid offering baked goods high in sugar and low in nutrients such as cakes, pastries and cookies. Your baby has a small stomach and fills up quickly. Offer foods that give your baby the nutrients they need for proper growth and development. Go to [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca) for healthy recipes.

## Milk and Milk Alternatives (includes products such as cheese and yogurt)

- Continue to breastfeed or give expressed breast milk in addition to solid foods.
- Offer full fat milk alternatives such as yogurt, kefir and cottage cheese (at least 2% MF). Your baby needs the full fat products for their growth and development.
- When your baby is between nine and 12 months of age and eating a variety of foods, including iron-rich foods every day, you may start to offer pasteurized **homogenized (3.25% MF)** cow's milk in an open cup in addition to breast milk. If it is the child's main milk source, offer 500 mL/day. Limit to no more than 750 mL/day. Pasteurized full fat goat milk with added folic acid and vitamin D may be offered instead of cow's milk.
- Offer homogenized (3.25% MF) milk until your child is two years old; after that lower fat milk may be offered.
- Fortified soy beverage should not be given as a main milk source before two years of age.
- Rice, almond, or other plant-based beverages such as coconut 'milk' are not suitable as a baby's or young child's main milk source.



## Vitamin D

Health Canada recommends a daily vitamin D supplement of 400 IU (10 µg) for babies and young children (from birth to two years) being breastfed or receiving breast milk. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions.

## Other Beverages

Babies can fill up on beverages leaving little room for healthy food and beverages that provide your baby with the nutrients they need for proper growth and development. Make sure that other beverages do not replace your child's main milk source.

**TIP:** Avoid using 'sippy' cups. Using an open cup helps your baby to develop their drinking skills. At first your baby will need your help and may only take small amounts, but they will get better with practice.

- Offer sips of water from an open cup for thirst. It also helps them learn to drink from a cup.
- Babies should not be given beverages with added sugar, artificial sweeteners or caffeine. Do not offer fruit beverages, punches, crystals, pop, diet pop, sports drinks, tea, herbal teas or coffee.

## Foods with High Risk of Choking

Foods that increase risk of choking are hard, small and round, or smooth and sticky. Large cheese cubes, pieces of raw vegetables and some dry cereals may also cause problems for babies and young children. **Do not give foods that may cause choking to children less than four years of age such as:** popcorn, hard candies, raisins, gum, peanuts or other nuts, sunflower seeds or other seeds, fish with bones and snacks using toothpicks or skewers.

### To lower your baby's risk of choking:

- Make sure your baby is always sitting while eating and drinking.
- **Always be with your baby and watch them when they are eating and drinking.**
- Be aware of your baby's ability to chew and prepare food at the texture they can manage.
- Do not give your baby food in a moving car.

### Suggestions for preparing food safely for babies and young children:

Foods that may cause your baby to choke:	How to make food safer:
Stringy/fibrous foods such as celery, pineapple and some meats	Finely mince or cut the food into very small pieces
Hard raw vegetables or fruit	Use a grater to shred, or cook until soft
Round, smooth foods such as grapes, cherries	Take out seeds or pits and cut into pieces
Foods in a round or cylinder shape like wieners, sausages	Cut lengthwise and then into small pieces
Sticky foods like nut butters	Spread thinly, such as on toast; never on a spoon

# Introducing New Foods to Your Baby and Food Allergies

Start a new food when your baby is happy and hungry, such as at morning or mid-day meals. As you introduce new foods to your baby, continue to offer foods that your baby has already tried.

## Offer one new food at a time and watch for signs of allergy, such as:

- Stomach pain
- Runny nose
- Itchy and watery eyes
- Blood in stool
- Hives or skin rash
- Irritability
- Sneezing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Swelling of mouth and face

If your baby shows any sign of food allergy, stop feeding the food immediately and talk to your health care provider; it is important to get a proper diagnosis of a food allergy. If your baby has trouble breathing, call 911.

Some foods are more likely to cause a food allergy than others. **When offering a new food that is a common food allergen such as egg, milk, mustard, peanut,\* seafood (fish and shellfish), sesame, soy, sulphites, tree nuts\* and wheat:**

- Offer one new food at a time and wait two days before introducing another new food.
- During the two day waiting period, watch for signs of food allergy (see above).
- Once safely introduced, continue to offer the food regularly so your child will keep tolerating it.



\*Peanuts and tree nuts are a choking risk for babies and young children; do not offer whole nuts to children under four years of age.

## When offering new foods that are NOT common food allergens:

- Introduce new foods one at a time and watch for signs of food allergy (see above).
- New foods may be introduced without the two-day waiting period.

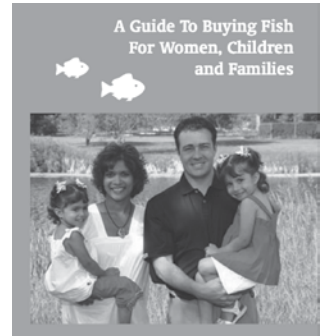
For more information on food allergy, see the Health Canada website at:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/allerg/fa-aa/index-eng.php>

**TIP:** If your baby is allergic to a food, do not feed that food. You may want to talk to a Registered Dietitian to help you choose foods to replace the nutrients in the missing food.

# How to Avoid Food Poisoning

- **Do not give honey** to your child until after they are one year old to prevent botulism, a form of food poisoning. This includes pasteurized honey and foods with honey in them, even if they are cooked.
- **Do not give unpasteurized** milk, dairy products, juice or cider.
- Avoid foods that contain raw or undercooked meat, poultry or fish.
- Make sure eggs are fully cooked and do **not** use foods that contain raw eggs to avoid salmonella food poisoning.
- Do **not** feed your baby fresh or frozen tuna steaks, swordfish, shark, marlin, pickerel, tilefish, barracuda, orange roughy, escolar or walleye. These fish are high in mercury. For more information see: A Guide to Eating Fish for Women, Children and Families at [www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph) or for a copy, call Region of Waterloo Public Health at 519-575-4400 (TTY 519-575-4608).



# Food Safety

- Always wash your hands well, before preparing food or feeding your baby.
- Get into the habit early of cleaning your baby's hands before (and after) they eat.
- Thoroughly wash all bowls and spoons for feeding in hot soapy water, rinse well and air dry.
- When preparing food, always follow safe food handling practices. For information about safe food handling at home go to [www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph) or call Region of Waterloo Public Health at 519-575-4400 (TTY 519-575-4608).



## Store-Bought Baby Food

When buying and feeding your baby store-bought baby food:

- Check the “best before” date; do not use if it is past that date.
- Make sure the plastic safety seal has not been broken.
- Listen for a ‘popping’ sound when the jar is opened for the first time. Do not give food from jars that do not make this sound.
- Cover opened containers of baby food and store in the refrigerator.
- Mark the date the container was opened to help keep track of when to throw it out:
  - Covered containers of vegetables and fruit will keep for up to two days in the refrigerator.
  - Covered containers of meat, poultry and mixed foods containing meat or poultry may be refrigerated for up to 24 hours.



**TIP:** Do **not** feed your baby directly from the container; bacteria from your baby’s mouth will get into food left in the container. Spoon some into a bowl and feed from the bowl. If your baby is still hungry, add more to the bowl with a spoon that has not been in your baby’s mouth. Throw away any food left in the bowl when your baby is done eating.

## Making Your Own Baby Food

You can make your own baby food from the same nutritious foods you feed the rest of the family. Some babies like the taste of homemade food better than store-bought food and it can:

- Save you money.
- Give your baby a wider variety of foods compared to what is found in jars of store-bought baby food.
- Allow you to have more control over the texture.

Be sure to follow safe food handling practices and to cook and store food properly. For information about safe food handling at home go to [www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph) or call Region of Waterloo Public Health at 519-575-4400 (TTY 519-575-4608).

Follow these basic recipes but change the amount of liquid to change the texture. Move to thicker, lumpier textures **as soon as your baby is able to handle them**. Many babies can handle lumpy foods at six months.

Foods	Liquid (approximate amount)	Prepared Food (approximate amount)
Cooked vegetables: 200 mL (¾ cup)	45 mL (3 Tbsp.) water	75-125 mL (⅓-½ cup)
Cooked fruit: 75-125 mL (⅓-½ cup)	10 mL (2 tsp.) water	75-125 mL (⅓-½ cup)
Cooked meats: 125 mL (½ cup)	60 mL (4 Tbsp.) water	75-125 mL (⅓-½ cup)

## Equipment Needed:

- Pots or microwave-safe dishes for cooking foods
- Blender, food processor or food mill (hand grinder), or wire sieve and wooden spoon for blending/puréeing
- Fork or potato masher for mashing lumpy foods
- Ice cube trays or cookie sheets for freezing single portions
- Plastic freezer bags or containers to store frozen food



## Tips for Preparing Food for Spoon Feeding

- Before starting, wash your hands.
- Wash and sanitize counters, cutting boards, utensils and all equipment.
- Remove seeds, pits and tough skin from vegetables and fruit.
- Cook vegetables or fruit in a small amount of boiling water or steam until tender.
- Thoroughly cook meat, poultry or fish. Check with a food thermometer to make sure it reaches a safe internal cooking temperature. See: <http://chd.region.waterloo.on.ca/en/healthyLivingHealthProtection/Food-Safety-at-Home.asp#CLEAN>
- Rinse canned foods with water to remove salt before cooking.
- Blend, mix, mash or chop the cooked food with the liquid - start with a small amount of liquid at first and slowly add more until the desired texture/thickness is reached.
- Do not add butter, gravy, salt, sauces, sugar, honey or molasses to foods.

## Tips for Storing Prepared Food

Refrigerate or freeze prepared food that is not going to be eaten right away. Prepared food should not be left at room temperature for more than two hours.

- Refrigerate prepared food for up to two days; throw out what is not used.
  - Store meat, poultry, fish and eggs for up to 24 hours.
- For freezer storage, freeze food in **small portions** for up to two months (at -18°C):
  - Place food in ice cube trays or 'drop' spoonfuls on a cookie sheet and freeze.
  - Once frozen, put in freezer bags and label for storage (name of food and date).

It is important to give your baby lumpier foods as soon as they can handle them; avoid putting large amounts of puréed food in the freezer.



## Thawing and Warming Prepared Food

Thaw only the amount of food needed for **one meal at a time** in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or as part of the reheating process.

Heat food until steaming hot, and let it cool before serving to your baby. It is important to **check the temperature of the food before serving it to your baby**. Stir the food well and use the back of your hand to make sure the food is warm, but **not hot**.

A **hot water bath** is the safest way to warm food for your baby: Place the food in a heat-safe dish and set the dish over a small pan of very hot water. Stir the food often so that it heats evenly. Always check the temperature before serving it to your baby.

Never refreeze thawed food. Once food has been warmed for your baby to eat, throw away any food that is not eaten; do not refrigerate for later.



## Warming Baby Food in the Microwave

Be very careful if you choose to warm your baby's food in the microwave. Microwaves heat food and liquids unevenly and can create hot spots that can burn your baby.

- Put food into a microwave-safe dish and heat on low to medium setting until steaming hot.
- Stir the food well and let it cool. Test the temperature before feeding it to your baby.
- Different foods heat at different rates. If heating more than one type of food in a dish, test the temperature of each food separately.



# Choosing Solid Foods Based on What Your Baby Can Do

Typical Age	What your baby can do
<p><b>6 months</b> (starting solids) Offer solid food once a day and then increase to twice a day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sits up without help</li> <li>• Controls head well</li> <li>• Opens mouth when offered food</li> <li>• Moves food to back of mouth with tongue and swallows food</li> <li>• Drinks from a cup with help</li> </ul>
<p><b>6-8 months</b> Progress to offer 3 meals and 1-2 snacks*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Munches food (chews in an up and down motion)</li> <li>• Grasps food with palm of hand</li> <li>• Takes food from hand into mouth</li> <li>• Drinks from open cup with spills</li> </ul>
<p><b>8-10 months</b> Offer 3 meals and 1-2 snacks*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bites off food</li> <li>• Picks food up with thumb and forefinger</li> <li>• Chews with circular movement</li> <li>• Curves lips around open cup</li> <li>• Drinks from cup with few spills</li> <li>• Tries to use spoon</li> </ul>
<p><b>10-12 months</b> 10-11 months offer 3 meals and 1-2 snacks* At 12 months offer 3 meals and 2-3 snacks*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gets better at picking up food with forefinger and thumb</li> <li>• Improves chewing</li> <li>• Improves drinking from open cup</li> <li>• Gets better at using a spoon</li> </ul>

\* Give snacks as needed depending on baby's appetite. Feed your baby sitting up in a high chair and include your baby at family meals.



Offer a variety of textures	Suggested Foods - Feed baby from a spoon and offer finger foods. Continue to breastfeed or offer expressed breast milk.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finely minced</li> <li>• Ground</li> <li>• Puréed</li> <li>• Soft mashed</li> <li>• Soft lumpy</li> </ul>	<p>Start with iron-rich foods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooked meat, poultry and fish</li> <li>• Cooked meat alternatives such as legumes (lentils, beans), eggs, tofu</li> <li>• Single grain infant cereal such as barley, rice, oat, wheat</li> <li>• Mixed cereals (after baby has tried single grains)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soft lumpy</li> <li>• Minced/Ground</li> <li>• Grated/Shredded</li> <li>• Lumpy mashed</li> <li>• Puréed</li> <li>• Soft diced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer iron-rich foods twice a day (see above for iron-rich foods)</li> <li>• Soft-cooked vegetables such as carrots, squash, broccoli</li> <li>• Soft ripe or soft-cooked fruit such as pear, peach, avocado</li> <li>• Full fat milk products such as plain yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese</li> <li>• Cooked whole grain pasta, brown rice</li> <li>• Finger foods such as dry toast cut into strips, soft ripe banana</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grated/Shredded</li> <li>• Minced/Ground</li> <li>• Lumpy mashed</li> <li>• Soft chopped food</li> <li>• Foods that soften or dissolve in the mouth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to offer iron-rich foods two or more times a day</li> <li>• Soft-cooked vegetables or soft ripe fruit</li> <li>• Grated raw vegetables and fruit like carrot and apple</li> <li>• Full fat milk products such as cheese, yogurt, kefir, cottage cheese</li> <li>• Casseroles and mixed dishes</li> <li>• Finger foods: soft ripe fruit, crackers, dry toast, bread crusts, pasta, sticky rice, dry unsweetened cereal such as 'O' shaped oat cereal</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare foods from the family table so they are safe for your baby to eat. Offer a variety of textures and small pieces of soft food that your baby can pick up and eat with their fingers.</li> <li>• Offer iron-rich foods two or more times a day.</li> <li>• At 12 months offer iron-rich foods at every meal.</li> <li>• Offer a variety of foods from the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide every day: Vegetables and Fruit; Grain Products; Milk and Alternatives; and Meat and Alternatives.</li> <li>• Homogenized (3.25% MF) cow's milk may be offered in an open cup between nine to 12 months of age, when baby is eating a variety of foods, including iron-rich foods every day.</li> </ul>	

Adapted from: Health Canada (2014) and Satter, E. (2000)

# Sample Feeding Schedule

This is only a guide; every baby is different. The number of times and amounts your baby eats in a day will change with how hungry your baby is. At first your baby may take only a small amount of food in a day. Gradually increase the amount you offer.

Feeding	<b>Starting solid foods (6 months)</b> Your baby sits up, has good head control and swallows food.
Early Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> </ul>
Morning (Breakfast)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> <li>Iron-fortified infant cereal or puréed, mashed or finely minced cooked legumes or other meat/meat alternative</li> </ul>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> </ul>
Midday (Lunch)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> </ul>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> </ul>
Early Evening (Supper/dinner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> <li>Finely minced, puréed, or mashed cooked chicken or other meat or meat alternative or iron-fortified infant cereal</li> </ul>
Evening Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> </ul>

\* Breastfeed or offer expressed breast milk according to your baby's cues. When breastfeeding or expressed breast milk is not available, iron-fortified artificial baby milk (formula) may be offered according to baby's appetite (watch for your baby's feeding cues).

## Let your baby choose what to eat and how much to eat from the foods you offer.

<b>6 - 8 months**</b> Your baby munches food, grasps food with palm of hand, reaches for spoon and starts to learn to drink from an open cup.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breastfeeding*</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breastfeeding*</li><li>• Iron-fortified infant cereal</li><li>• Mashed strawberry or other soft fruit</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whole grain toast, cut into small pieces or strips</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breastfeeding*</li><li>• Iron-fortified infant cereal</li><li>• Hard boiled egg mashed, minced or grated</li><li>• Cooked and mashed sweet potato or other vegetable</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Puréed, unsweetened stewed prunes</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breastfeeding*</li><li>• Ground or finely minced plain, cooked chicken or other meat</li><li>• Cooked and mashed broccoli or other vegetable</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breastfeeding*</li></ul>

\*\* From Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants Recommendations from six to 24 months (Health Canada, 2014); sample menu for seven month old infant.

# Sample Feeding Schedule

**Let your baby choose what to eat and how much to eat from the foods you offer.**

Feeding	<b>9 - 10 months</b> Your baby bites off food and chews.
Early Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding if needed</li> </ul>
Morning (Breakfast)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> <li>Iron-fortified infant cereal or scrambled egg or other meat alternative or meat</li> <li>Soft ripe pear or other ripe fruit, cut into small pieces</li> </ul>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unsweetened full fat plain yogurt or grated/shredded cheese</li> </ul>
Midday (Lunch)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> <li>Cooked mashed carrots or other vegetable</li> <li>Ground or finely chopped turkey or other meat or meat alternative</li> <li>Soft ripe banana as a finger food or soft ripe fruit cut into small pieces</li> </ul>
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole wheat pita, cut into small strips</li> </ul>
Early Evening (Supper/dinner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> <li>Ground beef or other meat or meat alternative</li> <li>Cooked mashed lumpy green beans or other vegetable</li> <li>Cooked macaroni or other pasta cut into small pieces</li> </ul>
Evening Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding*</li> </ul>

\* When breastfeeding or expressed breast milk is not available, iron-fortified artificial baby milk (formula) may be offered. Between nine and 12 months of age, homogenized (3.25% MF) cow's milk may be offered in an open cup when baby is eating a variety of foods, including iron-rich foods every day.

## 11 - 12 months

Your baby picks food up with thumb and forefinger and improves chewing.

- Breastfeeding if needed

- Breastfeeding\*
- Iron-fortified infant cereal
- Chopped strawberries or other fruit

- Unsweetened 'o'-shaped oat cereal or other grain product
- Applesauce or other fruit

- Breastfeeding\*
- Chopped chicken or other meat or meat alternative
- Steamed brown rice or other grain product
- Cooked chopped green beans or other vegetable
- Chopped kiwi or other fruit

- Chopped hard-boiled egg or other meat alternative or meat
- Whole wheat unsalted cracker or other grain product

- Breastfeeding\*
- Mashed canned salmon or other meat alternative or meat
- Whole wheat pasta or steamed brown rice or other grain product
- Mashed cooked squash or other vegetable
- Chopped soft ripe peach or other fruit

- Breastfeeding\*

# Where to Get Infant Feeding Help

Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services:

[www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph) ..... 519-575-4400 (TTY 519-575-4608)

EatRight Ontario: [www.eatrightontario.ca](http://www.eatrightontario.ca) ..... 1-877-510-5102

Ontario Early Years Centres: [www.earlyyearsinfo.ca](http://www.earlyyearsinfo.ca)

Kitchener ..... 519-571-1626

Kitchener-Waterloo ..... 519-741-8585

Cambridge ..... 519-740-8353

Telehealth Ontario: for breastfeeding support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week ..... 1-866-797-0000

Websites for more information:

Food Allergy Canada: [www.foodallergycanada.ca](http://www.foodallergycanada.ca)

Canadian Paediatric Society: [www.caringforkids.cps.ca](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca)

Dietitians of Canada: [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

Health Canada: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

Healthy Canadians:

<http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/kids-enfants/infant-care-soins-bebe/nutrition-alimentation-eng.php>

New Parent Resource Guide: [www.bit.ly/newparentresourceguide](http://www.bit.ly/newparentresourceguide)

References:

Health Canada, Canadian Paediatric Society, Dietitians of Canada, & Breastfeeding Committee for Canada (2014). Nutrition for healthy term infants: Recommendations from six to 24 months.

Satter, Ellyn. (2000). Child of Mine: Feeding with Love and Good Sense. California: Bull Publishing Company.

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**Notes:**

Alternate formats of this document  
are available upon request.

**519-575-4400, TTY: 519-575-4608**

[www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/ph)



Region of Waterloo  
PUBLIC HEALTH AND  
EMERGENCY SERVICES