

# OTHER FEEDING TIPS

**1. LISTEN AND RESPECT YOUR BABY’S CUES THAT HE OR SHE IS HUNGRY or is FINISHED**

**EATING.** Cues that your baby is hungry include: limb movements, fussing, mouthing, and sucking. **Never delay** a feeding to meet a schedule this creates harmful pain in your child. Children nurse for comfort, thirst and hunger. How can one place an arbitrary schedule on cuddling, thirst (one day may be hotter than another) and hunger in a growing child? At the other extreme, **never force** your baby to Finish a Bottle or Food. (Your baby is the best judge of how much to eat and over-feeding can lead to weight problems.) A newborn baby is satiated when after a feeding he or she appears calm and lays with palms open, eyes half closed and a relaxed body. **IDEALLY** Breastfed babies ARE ALLOWED TO end breastfeeding on their own (all except sleepy newborn babies who may need some help from mom at first). Signs that an older baby is finished eating solids include baby turns away, leans back in chair or loses interest in eating.

**2. BABY’S FIRST FOOD IS BREASTMILK** (or formula if mom cannot breastfeed). Baby’s **RARELY** need solid food before 6 months as they cannot digest it earlier resulting in food allergies, obesity, and stomach distress. If you must use formula see our, “How to Feed Formula,” handout.

**3. BOTTLES** are for expressed breastmilk when mom cannot feed directly from the breast, iron-fortified formula, or diluted UNSWEETENED juice.

**\*NO SOLIDS IN BOTTLES** (Baby can choke and won’t learn to eat with a spoon)

**\*NO KOOL-AID, NO SODAS** (These have lots of sugar, no nutrients and they suppress baby’s appetite)

**\*LIMIT JUICES** (Juices are lower in nutrition than the fruit itself and they suppress baby’s appetite)

**\*Discourage** their use after 18 months for proper tooth development.

**\*NEVER, EVER PUT BABY TO BED WITH A BOTTLE** (Or your baby may develop bottle caries)

**4. IDEALLY, WAIT UNTIL YOUR BABY IS READY FOR SOLIDS.** Signs that baby is ready for solids are: baby grabs at food, is able to sit up with minimal support, and mouths and chews objects. In addition, the baby may initially push the food back out because of the “tongue retrusion” reflex, if this persists strongly then baby may not be ready for solids. Babies are **rarely** ready for solids at 4 months, **most are ready in the sixth month**, but some **may not be ready** until the eighth month. If however you do choose to introduce foods earlier than 6 months, do so very slowly. Start with potato or rice cereal **only** for the first month and then introduce just one food a week until the sixth month.

**5. OFFER SMALL AMOUNTS AT FIRST.** Make food thin and smooth by mixing it with a little water or breastmilk. Use a **SPOON** to feed baby.

**6. ADD ONE NEW FOOD AT A TIME,** wait about **5 days** in between (**7 days** for allergic children or families). This gives your baby time to adjust to the new food, if there is a reaction, its easier to determine which food may have caused it.

**7. BUY PLAIN, ONE-ITEM PROTEIN FOODS.** Avoid combinations, because they have much **less protein**. For example, one jar of chicken is equal to 4 and 1/3 jars of chicken and noodles.

**8. HOW MUCH TO SERVE**

With Each New Food	6 months	7-9 months	10-12 months
1-2 tsp. once or twice a day for 5-7 days	2-3 Tbsp. of solids at each of 4-5 feedings	6-7 Tbsp. Of various solids at each of 3-4 feedings	7-10 Tbsp. Of various solids at each of 3-4 feedings

**9. DO NOT GIVE BABY:** *\*Nuts \*Seeds \*Raw Carrots \*Popcorn \*Hard Candy* (due to the risk of choking). **DO NOT** give Babies under one year **corn syrup** or **raw honey** or baby may develop botulism.

**10. SIGNS OF FOOD ALLERGY:** *skin rashes such as hives, blotchy red patches, eczema, swelling of the lips or eyelids, coughing, diarrhea and vomiting.* Isolated diarrhea and vomiting may be symptoms of food INTOLERANCE rather than allergy, and rashes occurring only in the diaper area probably result from pH changes in the stools.