

# Feeding your Baby

## A Guide for the First Year



### Feeding Do's & Dont's

Do!

- Hold and cuddle your baby when breastfeeding or feeding a bottle.
- Smile, talk, and maintain eye contact with your baby at mealtime.
- Make mealtime a relaxed and happy time together.
- Offer a variety of foods including fruits and vegetables at meals and snacks.
- Let baby feed himself, even if it is messy!
- Try foods again if baby "does not like it" at first. It might take 10-15 times!
- Be positive when offering new foods, even if you do not like the food.
- Listen for a "pop" when you open a new jar of baby food. If it doesn't "pop," throw it out.
- Use refrigerated baby food within 3 days.

Don't

- No infant feeders. Do not prop the bottle.
- No cereals, juices or foods in the bottle.
- No baby desserts or mixed dinners.
- No cow's, goat's or soy milk before one year old.
- No fruit drinks, tea, Kool-aid®, Gatorade™, soda pop or coffee
- Do not feed directly from the baby food jar.
- Do not add salt, sugar, butter, or honey to baby's foods.



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an equal opportunity provider.*

**Parenting can be hard work! Take care of yourself.**  
It is easier to enjoy your baby and be a positive,  
loving parent when you are feeling good.

**OHIO**  
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Women, Infants, and Children Program



0-6 months

**Exclusive breastfeeding recommended.**

- Only breastmilk
- Mostly breastmilk with some iron-fortified formula
- Iron-fortified formula
- No juice, water, cereal or food needed
- Ask doctor if extra vitamins or minerals are needed



6-9 months

**Baby is ready to eat food.**

- Breastfeed or formula feed first
- Use a small dish and feed by spoon only:
  - infant cereal
  - meat
  - fruits
  - vegetables
- Use single item baby foods or mashed table foods
- Try one new food at a time for 3-4 days
- Try food in any order
- Start water in a cup without a lid
- Begin trying finger foods



9-12 months

**Continue to breastfeed or formula feed.**

- Let baby use open cup for pumped breastmilk, formula, or water
  - Let baby practice using a spoon
  - Try soft table foods in small pieces, such as:
    - cooked vegetables
    - peeled, soft fruit
    - mashed or finely cut meat, chicken, fish, tofu, eggs
    - cheese slices, yogurt
    - toast
    - cottage cheese
- !** DO NOT give hot dogs, peanut butter, nuts, seeds, popcorn, and other small, hard foods that can cause baby to choke.



1 year old

**It is normal to continue breastfeeding past one year.**

- Wean from bottle  
Child has outgrown the bottle
- Start whole milk in a cup
- Give table foods during family meals
- Can offer small amounts of juice in a cup



**How do I know**  
*when my baby is ready for new foods?*

1. Baby sits with support and has good head and neck control.
2. Baby leans forward with open mouth.
3. Baby can keep most of the food in his mouth and swallow it.
4. Baby can pick up food with his hand.