

Feeding Your Baby

6 months
to 1 year



Feeding your baby is about many things:

- It's about nutrition.
- It's about forming a close bond with your baby.
- It's about helping your baby feel secure and loved.
- It's about your baby's growth and development.
- It's about developing life-long healthy eating habits.

Health Canada recommends that breastmilk is the only food your baby needs until your baby is 6 months old. Infants should start iron-rich foods at 6 months with continued breastfeeding for 2 years or longer.

- Breastfeeding is healthy, natural, convenient, and free.
- Breastmilk contains antibodies that lower the chance of your baby getting sick.



Vitamin and Mineral Supplements

Fluoride

Fluoride helps children develop strong teeth. Do not give fluoride supplements to your baby before 6 months of age. It can harm your baby's developing teeth. At 6 months of age, your baby may need fluoride drops if your water supply does not contain fluoride. Some communities do not put fluoride in the water. Check with your local public health office or dentist to see if the water in your community is fluoridated. Talk to your health care provider for more information.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is needed for bone growth. Most babies, no matter the season or where they live, need a supplement of vitamin D starting at birth.

Currently, Health Canada recommends that all breastfed, healthy term babies receive 400 IU (International Units) of liquid vitamin D supplement each day.

Infant formula contains added vitamin D. Babies who are formula fed but are drinking less than 1000 ml or 32 ounces a day, would benefit from 400 IU vitamin D supplement each day.

Babies who are partially breastfed and supplemented with formula, would benefit from 400 IU vitamin D supplement each day.

Older babies and toddlers may still benefit from vitamin D supplements. Speak to your health care provider about vitamin D needs for your child.



Help your baby be successful with eating

- Make sure baby is sitting up during meal times – in a highchair is best.
- Include your baby in the family mealtime routine. Feed your baby while other family members are eating.
- Stay with your baby when she is eating. Talk quietly and encourage her while she eats.

Let your baby take the lead with eating:

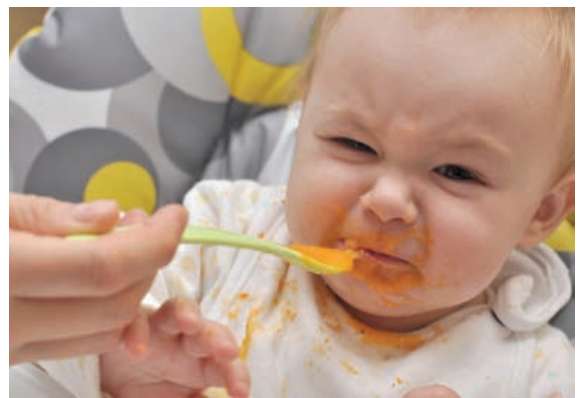
- Let your baby open his mouth before you feed him.
- Let your baby touch her food - in the dish, on the spoon, or on the tray.
- Allow her to feed herself with her fingers as soon as she shows interest.
- Feed your baby at his pace. Do not try to get him to go faster or slower than he wants.
- Stop feeding when your baby shows that she has had enough. Do not force your baby to finish her food. A baby will eat when she is hungry and stop when she is full. Remember a baby's appetite can change from day to day.
- Be patient when offering new foods. It may take 15-20 tries of a new food before your baby likes it.
- Have fun!

Signs of hunger

- Excited and smacks lips when placed in high chair
- Opens mouth when offered food
- Leans forward and reaches for the food

Signs of fullness

- Shuts mouth when offered food
- Turns or pushes the food away
- Cries to get out of high chair



Why wait until my baby is 6 months old to start solid foods?

Since birth your baby has been growing well on breastmilk or infant formula with iron. At 6 months breastmilk and formula with iron should still be your baby's main food, but now it is time to add solid foods. Solid foods provide nutrients and textures needed for your baby's healthy growth and development.

If you give your baby solid foods too early:

- Your baby may drink less breastmilk or iron fortified infant formula.
- Your baby may have a hard time swallowing solid foods which may increase the risk of choking.



Studies show that feeding solid foods will not help your baby sleep through the night!

These are signs your baby is ready for solid foods:

- sits up with very little help
- holds his head up
- opens her mouth when food is offered
- turns his head to refuse food

NOTE: *If your baby was born prematurely, speak with your health care provider for guidelines on when to start solid foods.*

Feeding Tips

- Choose foods and textures that suit your baby's skills and age.
- It is important to try different textures. This helps baby to learn to chew, swallow and enjoy the same food the family is eating.
 - Babies do not need to have teeth to eat solid foods.
 - You can make your own food for baby. See page 16 for how-to ideas.
- If using store-bought baby food, check the expiry date on the jar or package. Do not use past the expiry date.
 - Use a small bowl or plate for feeding your baby. Do not feed your baby from the jar.
- Any food left over should be thrown out as germs can spoil the food.
- When warming baby food, stir and test it to make sure it is not too hot.
- Put a small amount of food in front of your baby and see what happens. Your baby may play with it, taste it or eat it all.
- Start with one or two teaspoons of food and gradually increase according to baby's appetite. Let baby decide how much to eat.
- Start with one meal a day and gradually increase to three meals a day and snacks.
- Your baby does not need sugar, sweeteners or salt added to food.
- Try only one new food at a time. Wait at least two days before trying another new food. This helps you find out if a food causes an allergic reaction. Stop feeding the food if the baby has a reaction. Talk to your health care provider. Call 911 or emergency services if your baby is having trouble breathing.

Some possible signs of an allergic reaction are:

- rash or hives
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- stomach pain
- breathing problems

DID YOU KNOW? *Your baby's poop may change colour or consistency with new foods. This is normal.*

NOTE: *Vegetarian diets are sometimes low in fat and calories. If you are planning a vegetarian diet, speak to a registered dietitian by calling your local public health office or community health centre. Manitoba residents can also speak to a registered dietitian by calling Dial-a-Dietitian at 204-788-8248 or toll free 1-877-830-2892.*

Iron Rich Foods

IRON RICH FOODS

At 6 months your baby should start with iron-rich foods because your baby's iron level is becoming low. Iron is important for healthy red blood cells and for brain development.

Feeding iron-rich foods to your baby:

- Add one new iron-rich food at a time.
- Try beef, pork, lamb, veal, chicken, turkey, fish, wild meat, egg, tofu, legumes (split peas, beans, lentils) and iron-fortified cereal.
- Give fish without bones such as white fish, salmon and light canned tuna. Limit swordfish, shark, fresh or frozen tuna steak, canned albacore tuna, marlin, orange roughy and escolar to once per month because they are often high in mercury.
- Processed meats such as ham, bacon, wieners, salami, bologna or sausages are not good choices. They are high in salt and low in nutrition.
- You can start with one to two teaspoons of food and gradually increase according to baby's appetite. Let baby decide how much to eat.

DID YOU KNOW? Research now shows it is not necessary to delay giving fish, eggs, or any food to your baby to reduce or prevent allergies to these foods.



Fish



Beef



Lentils



Chicken

Feeding eggs to your baby

- Egg yolk is high in iron. You can offer your baby the whole egg (both the white and yolk).
- Try mashed hard-boiled eggs or scrambled eggs.
- Do not feed your baby foods that contain raw or under-cooked (runny) eggs.



Feeding iron-fortified infant cereal to your baby:

- Choose iron-fortified infant cereal, not adult cereal. Infant cereal has more iron than adult cereal.
- Start with single-grain, iron-fortified infant cereals like rice, barley or oatmeal. Then, offer mixed grain iron-fortified infant cereal.
- Read the label on the cereal box and follow directions for mixing.



NOTE: *Low birth weight babies or premature infants have special iron needs. Talk to your health care provider for more information.*

Vegetables and Fruit

After your baby has started eating iron-rich foods, vegetables and fruit can be added to meals.



Vegetables

Feeding vegetables to baby:

- Try one new vegetable at a time.
- Let baby learn the taste of each vegetable.
- Examples of vegetables to try are soft cooked broccoli, potatoes, squash, peas, green and yellow beans, carrots, etc.
- You can use fresh, frozen or canned vegetables. Rinse the canned vegetables first to remove some of the salt or use unsalted products.

Fruit

Feeding fruit to baby:

- Try one new fruit at a time.
- Use soft, ripe, fresh fruit, cooked fruit or unsweetened canned fruit in its own juice (not in syrup). Use a fork to mash fruit before feeding it to your baby (see the Recipe and Feeding Guide on page 16 of this booklet).
- Examples of fruit to try are bananas, pears, peaches, plums, avocado, frozen berries, etc.
- Store-bought “baby desserts” are high in sugar. Your baby does not need them.

Fruit juice:

- Babies get all the fluid they need from breastmilk or infant formula with iron. They do not need juice, fruit drinks, drink crystals or pop. These beverages can cause early childhood tooth decay (rotten teeth).

Grain Products

Feeding grain products to your baby:

- Iron-fortified infant cereal is usually the first grain product given to babies. Continue to feed iron-fortified infant cereals and start to add other grain products that are in the right texture for your baby.
- Examples of grain products to try are cooked barley, rice, oats, bulgur, quinoa and foods like breads, bagels, pasta, couscous, pancakes and unsalted crackers.
- Choose whole grain varieties. Include brown or wild rice, and whole wheat pastas. Look for ingredients like “whole grain”, “whole wheat flour”, “whole rye”, “whole oat” or “whole barley” when choosing breads and cereals.
- Sometimes as babies get older, they no longer want infant cereal made in the usual way. Vegetables and fruit can be added to change the taste and add variety.



Milk Products

Feeding milk products to your baby:

- Breastfeeding is recommended until your baby is 2 years of age and older.
- Once your baby is eating iron-rich foods at most meals and is between 9 to 12 months of age, homogenized (3.25% MF) cow's milk can be offered in a lidless cup.
- Other milk products to try include plain yogurt, cottage cheese, and other types of cheese like cheddar or mozzarella. Harder cheese can be grated or cut into thin slices.
- Limit your baby to 3 cups (750 ml) of milk per day. Your baby needs a variety of foods to stay healthy.
- Unpasteurized cow's milk and unpasteurized cheese are not safe.
- Wait until your child is at least 2 years old to give 2% MF or any other low-fat milk, soy beverage, almond beverage or rice beverage. These beverages do not contain enough nutrients to help your baby grow.



Textures of Food for Baby

Textures


It is important for baby to try different textures. This helps baby learn to chew, swallow and enjoy the same food the family is eating.

Some tips:

- Choose foods and textures that suit your baby's skill and age.
- If you offer lumpier foods too late, it may be difficult to get your baby to accept these foods.
- Seat your baby at the family table either in their high chair or on your lap.
- Babies gag or spit out food when learning to eat. This is normal.
- Let baby explore and make a mess while eating. Mashing, smelling and smearing are all part of learning to eat. This increases confidence and willingness to try new things.
- Learning to eat is a gradual process and does not happen overnight.

Textures of food for baby

6 months	7 to 8 months	9 to 12 months
Strained, pureed, smooth foods	Mashed, minced, grated, finely chopped foods; table and finger foods	Diced, cubed, table and finger foods

The image shows three spoons arranged horizontally, each containing a different texture of orange-colored food. The first spoon on the left contains a smooth, uniform puree. The middle spoon contains a mixture of small, irregularly shaped pieces, representing finely chopped or minced food. The third spoon on the right contains larger, distinct cubes or chunks of food, representing diced or cubed food.

TIP: *The ages listed above are a general guideline. Every baby is different and your baby may progress faster or slower with different textures.*

Finger Foods

- Once your baby is around 7 months old, it is time to leave the smooth or pureed foods behind and gradually move to healthy table food.
- Around 9 months of age, babies will be able to hold food in their hands and bring it to their mouths. Offering finger foods helps babies learn to chew and feed themselves.
- Most older babies enjoy eating with their hands. Be ready for some fun and a mess!
- Finger foods should be healthy foods. Avoid foods high in sugar or salt.

Examples of finger foods:

- soft, ripe, peeled fruit
 - cut into bite-size pieces or strips (bananas, pears, peaches, plums, strawberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, or kiwi)
 - seedless grapes do not have to be peeled but should be cut into four bite-size pieces
- cooked vegetable pieces (cut into strips)
- toast strips, bread, bagel pieces, rice cakes, melba toast, unsalted crackers
- shredded cheese, cheese cubes or cut-up cheese sticks
- cooked tender meat finely cut up
- small pieces of boneless, cooked fish
- small pieces of casserole or stew
- cooked pasta or rice
- cooked eggs
- tofu cut into small pieces
- cooked beans, lentils and peas



These foods are NOT good choices during baby's first year:

- honey may cause botulism, a type of food poisoning, that could make your baby sick
- candies and chocolate
- soft drinks, drink crystals, sport drinks, slushy-type drinks
- tea, coffee, herbal teas
- salt, pickles, olives
- low-fat and diet foods sweetened with sugar substitutes
- snack foods such as potato chips, pretzels, cheese puffs, french fries
- cakes, cookies, marshmallows, sugar-coated cereal, jello
- salad dressings, mayonnaise, ketchup
- processed meats

DID YOU KNOW? *Food for baby does not need extra sugar or salt. Products labelled as “fun baby foods or snacks” are not necessary or healthy for your baby.*



These foods can cause CHOKING and should be avoided until your child is about 4 years old:

- raisins, gum and hard candies (including cough drops)
- popcorn, nuts and seeds
- fish with bones
- snacks with toothpicks or skewers

These foods are safer for infants and young children when they are prepared as described:

- Make vegetables safer by grating, cooking and cutting into bite-sized pieces.
- Make fruits safer by removing pits and seeds, grating and cutting into bite-sized pieces e.g. grape cut into 4 pieces.
- Cut sausages or hotdogs lengthwise into 4 and then into bite-sized pieces.
- Spread peanut butter thinly on a cracker or bread to make it easier to swallow.



Making Food for your Baby

- Making food for your baby lets you offer textures that are right for your baby.
- Food should be smooth and pureed to start and progress to a variety of textures.
- It is easy to mash foods with a fork or potato masher or an inexpensive food chopper or food blender.
- Store-bought baby foods are fine, but not necessary. For convenience, you can buy frozen or canned vegetables without added salt and canned or frozen fruit with no sugar added.
- Prepared foods can be stored in a covered container in the refrigerator or freezer. See page 19 for food safety and storage.

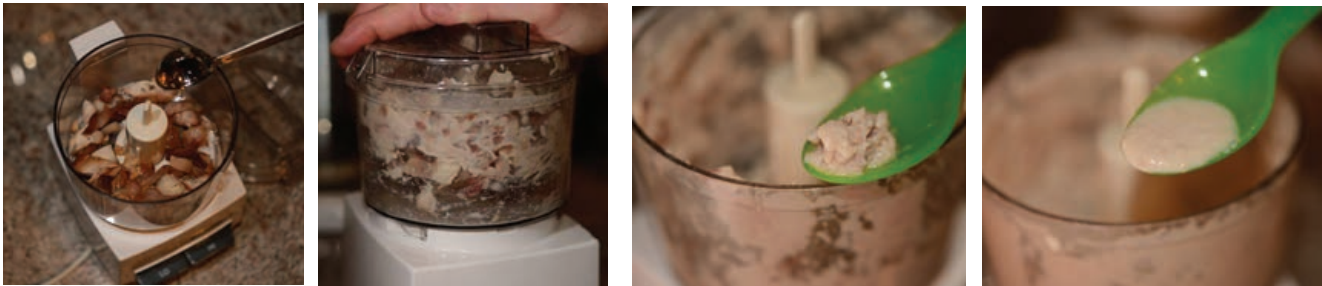
Preparing meat or fish

What you need:

- Cooked meat or fish with all skin and bones removed.
- Liquid (this can be either the water the meat or fish was cooked in, breastmilk or infant formula).

What to do:

- For babies just starting solids, add cooked meat or fish to a blender and add a small amount of liquid.
- Make the texture that is right for your baby.



Preparing vegetables or fruit

What you need:

- Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables or fruit. If using fresh vegetables or fruit; wash, peel, remove any pits or seeds, and slice.
- Liquid (this can be either the water the vegetables or fruit was cooked in, breastmilk or infant formula).

What to do:

1. Put fruit or vegetables into a pot with water that comes up half way in the pot.
2. Cook until vegetables or fruit are soft.
3. Drain the vegetables or fruit.
4. Puree with a blender or mash with a fork using a small amount of liquid to get the right texture.

If using a microwave for vegetables or fruit, place all ingredients in a microwave safe glass bowl and heat on high until vegetables or fruit are soft. Cooking times will vary. Stir well to avoid hot spots. Continue with step 4 in the recipe above.



NOTE: Some vegetables and fruit take longer to cook than others. Check for doneness by mashing a piece with a fork. It should mash easily.

Some vegetables and fruit do not need to be cooked (banana, avocado, kiwi, tomato).

Preparing Legumes

Legumes include split peas, lentils and beans such as pinto, kidney, black, etc.

What you need:

- Legumes – dried or canned
- Liquid (this can be either water, breastmilk, or infant formula)

What to do:

1. If using dried legumes, cook according to package directions.
2. If using canned legumes, drain and rinse well. They are already cooked.
3. Puree with a blender or mash with a fork using liquid to get the right texture.



Keeping Foods Safe for Baby to Eat

Babies are at a higher risk of getting sick from food that was not prepared or stored properly. Follow these steps to help keep your baby safe!

Clean

- Always wash hands with warm, soapy water before making or serving baby food. Don't forget to wash baby's hands too!
- Make sure all surfaces and equipment that will be used to make or serve food have been cleaned using hot, soapy water.
- Any dishes or utensils that have touched raw meat, poultry, fish or eggs should not be used again until they have been washed in hot, soapy water.
- Wash all fresh vegetables and fruit before using, including melons.



Separate

- Keep raw meat, poultry, fish, and eggs away from foods that are ready to eat, such as fresh vegetables and fruit. This should be done at all times: in the grocery cart, shopping bags, fridge, and on the counter or plate.
- Use separate cutting boards, one for meats and one for vegetables and fruit.

Cook and Reheat

- Thaw food in the fridge, using the microwave, or in a sealed container placed under cold, running water. Thawing food at room temperature is not safe. Harmful bacteria could grow on the food as it sits at room temperature.
- Make sure food for baby is cooked or reheated to safe temperatures. Use a meat thermometer to check the temperature:

Ground meat	71 C	160 F
Beef and pork	71 C	160 F
Wild game	74 C	165 F
Poultry (whole bird)	85 C	185 F
Poultry pieces	74 C	165 F
Fish	71 C	160 F
Eggs	71 C	160 F
Leftovers and casseroles	74 C	165 F



- If you don't own a meat thermometer, continue to cook the food until:
 - Poultry, beef, and pork: the flesh is no longer pink, and the meat separates easily from the bone
 - Fish: flakes easily
 - Eggs: both the white and yolk are firm (yolk is no longer runny)
 - Leftovers and casseroles: heavy steam rises from the middle of the food ensuring the entire portion is heated.
- Reheat food in the microwave, on the stove top or in the oven. Stir thoroughly to ensure there are no hot spots.
- Before feeding the baby check that the food is warm, not hot, so baby's mouth does not burn.

NOTE: Remember to use a small bowl or plate when feeding your baby. Do not feed baby from the jar. Any leftover food should be thrown out as germs can spoil the food.

Chill

- Homemade food for baby, opened jars of baby food, and prepared infant formula should not be left at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Opened jars of baby food and home prepared vegetables and fruit can be kept in the fridge for two days. Fridge temperature should be 4°C (40°F) or colder.
- Home prepared meat, poultry, fish, and eggs for baby should only be kept in the fridge for 24 hours.
- Food for baby can be kept for three months in the fridge freezer.



TIP: Freeze food for baby in ice cube trays or drop by spoonfuls onto a cookie sheet. Once the food is frozen, place the cubes or spoonful into freezer bags. Remember to label and date the freezer bag.

Feeding Guide

Remember! Every baby is different.

This is only a guide.

Time of Day	6 Months	7 Months	8 - 9 Months	10-11 Months	12 Months
Early Morning	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breastfeeding provides lots of benefits to you and your baby – keep going! Offer a variety of table foods (watch for choking). Wean your baby from the bottle Aim for three meals and two to three snacks a day
Morning	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods*	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods** Vegetables Fruit	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods* Vegetables Fruit Grains	Breastmilk, formula* or homo milk 3.25% MF Iron-rich foods** Vegetables Fruit, Yogurt, Grains	
Noon	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods*	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods** Vegetables Fruit	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods* Vegetables Fruit Grains	Breastmilk, formula* or homo milk 3.25% MF Iron-rich foods** Vegetables Fruit, Grains	
Afternoon	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk, formula* or homo milk 3.25% MF Snack	
Late Afternoon / Early Evening	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods*	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods** Vegetables Fruit	Breastmilk or formula* Iron-rich foods* Vegetables Fruit Grains	Breastmilk, formula* or homo milk 3.25% MF Iron-rich foods** Vegetables Fruit, Grains	
Evening	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula* Snack	
Night Time	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	Breastmilk or formula*	

* formula, with iron **Iron-rich foods: poultry, beef, eggs, legumes, infant cereal

Parents are responsible for what their child is given to eat.

The child will choose how much, or if, he or she eats.

TIP: Try offering your baby water, breastmilk or formula in a lidless cup at meal times.

Resources

If you have questions about feeding your baby, contact:

- Baby's Doctor
- Nurse Practitioner
- Public Health Nurse
- Community Health Nurse
- Registered Nurse
- Registered Dietitian
- Registered Community Nutritionist

To speak to a registered dietitian for free, call:

Dial-a-Dietitian

204-788-8248 (in Winnipeg)

1-877-830-2892 (toll free outside Winnipeg)

Websites

Breastfeeding Committee for Canada

Baby-Friendly Initiative -

Practice Outcomes Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services Summary

breastfeedingcanada.ca/documents/2012-05-14_BCC_BFI_Ten_Steps_Integrated_Indicators_Summary.pdf

Canadian Dental Association **cda-adc.ca/_files/position_statements/fluoride.pdf**

Canadian Paediatric Society **cps.ca**

Dietitians of Canada **dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Nutrition-A-Z.aspx**

Health Canada

Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants: Recommendations from Birth to Six Months

hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/infant-nourisson/recom/index-eng.php

Manitoba Health **manitoba.ca/health/bfm/children.html**

Get copies of this resource

Download and print the pdf available at **manitoba.ca** (search feeding your baby 6 months to 1 year).

Request printed copies by completing *The Health Information Resources Order Form* on the Manitoba Health website at: manitoba.ca/health/jmc.

A special thank you to the Manitoba parents who provided photos of their babies.

For more information

For questions about feeding your baby healthy and nutritious foods:

Dial-a-Dietitian
204-788-8248 (in Winnipeg)
1-877-830-2892 (toll free outside)

For more resources on parenting

1-877-945-4777
www.manitobaparentzone.ca



Winnipeg Regional
Health Authority
Office régional de la
santé de Winnipeg



Dial-a-Dietitian