MAKE HEALTHY FEEDING CHOICES FOR YOUR BABY



NATIONAL NUTRITION WEEK
MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES EASIER
9-15 OCTOBER 2022

Breastmilk provides all the nutrients, water, protective and growth factors your baby needs for the first 6 months of life. There is no need to feed your baby anything other than breastmilk during this period. It changes according to your baby's current needs.

From 6 months, continue breastfeeding and add healthy foods. There is no need for store-bought baby foods. You can adjust the texture and consistency of family meals. Breastfeed first, then give other foods.

WHAT TO GIVE

- ✔ **Iron-rich foods.** It is important that the first foods you give your baby are high in iron. This includes either minced meat, chicken, chicken livers, boneless fish, eggs, cooked dry beans, split-peas or lentils. Iron is important for growth and brain development. Include a vitamin C-rich food such as naartjie segments to assist with the iron absorption from food.
- ✔ **Dark-green leafy vegetables and orange-coloured vegetables and fruit.** For example, cooked mashed pumpkin, butternut, spinach, carrots and fruit without pips such as paw-paw. These foods are a good source of vitamin A.
- ✔ **Starchy foods** such as fortified maize meal porridge, mashed sweet potatoes or mashed potatoes.

6-8 MONTHS OLD

HOW MUCH?
Start with 1-2 teaspoons twice a day. Gradually increase the amount of food and number of meals.

FOOD TEXTURE
Give cooked mashed food to ensure it is soft and easy for your baby to swallow.

TIP
Add breastmilk to mashed foods.

9-11 MONTHS OLD

HOW MUCH?
About ¼ cup, then increase to ½ cup per meal by 12 months, build up to 5 meals a day.

FOOD TEXTURE
At this age give small pieces of foods they can hold (cooked carrot sticks, sliced bananas). They can start to feed themselves.

12 MONTHS-2 YEARS

HOW MUCH?
About 1 cup per meal, 5 small meals a day.

FOOD TEXTURE
Your baby can manage to eat most family foods, chopped or mashed where needed.



TIPS

- ✔ Avoid adding any salt or sugars to family meals. Do not give high-sugar snacks to your baby.
- ✔ Avoid small hard foods that may cause choking like peas, peanuts and popcorn.
- ✔ Avoid giving tea (including rooibos tea) and other drinks to your baby. It will fill them up and spoil their appetites for foods that help them grow.
- ✔ There is **no** need for so-called growing-up formula or drinks for young children.
- ✔ From 6 months, give your baby clean, safe water that has been boiled and cooled to drink, from a cup.
- ✔ Remember to wash your hands, utensils, vegetables and fruit with clean water before preparing your baby's food. Also wash your baby's hands when he or she starts to hold pieces of food.
- ✔ **Remember to check the Road-to-Health booklet for more information.**

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