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# HELP ME BE HEALTHY



**I am your  
baby.**

**I GROW BEST WITH LOVE  
AND THE RIGHT FOOD!**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

I weigh \_\_\_\_\_ pounds and \_\_\_\_\_ ounces.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ inches tall.

My Hemoglobin is \_\_\_\_\_.

A special note for me \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Feeding is our special time

I should drink breastmilk until I turn 2, or longer if we both want to. If I do not drink breastmilk, I should drink baby formula until I turn 1 year old.



### Feed me just enough

When you feed me breastmilk or formula from a bottle:

- Give me a bottle with a nipple with a small hole.
- Hold me upright, and support my head with your hand.
- Gently touch my lips with the nipple, and wait until I open my mouth.
- Let me take the whole nipple in my mouth.
- Hold the bottle level, or tip slightly if needed to half-fill the nipple.
- Let me suck, swallow, and breathe.
- I will let you know when I need to take a break, or need to burp. I may:
  - have milk running from the corners of my mouth.
  - try to push the bottle away or turn my head.
  - gasp, choke, or cough.
- When I have had enough, I will turn away or fall asleep.
- Please do not keep trying to feed me.

## Help me learn to eat other foods

At 6 months, I may be ready to try new foods. Please go slowly. Talk with my doctor and WIC if our family has allergies or I was born early.

### I must be ready to eat other foods.

You will know I am ready when I can:

- Sit and hold my head steady.
- Show I want food by opening my mouth.
- Show I do not want food by closing my mouth or turning my head.

### Offer me only one new healthy food at a time.

My body must get used to each one.

- Start with a single food. It could be baby cereal, vegetables, fruit, or meat. I might only eat 1 or 2 spoonfuls each day.
- The first time I try wheat, soy, dairy, egg, fish, shellfish, peanut, tree nuts, or sesame, wait 3 days before trying another new food. These are the foods that are most likely to cause a food allergy.
- If I throw up, wheeze, get a rash or diarrhea, stop feeding me that food.
  - Call my doctor right away and tell WIC.



## I need to learn to eat all these different textures

1. Smooth: strained or puree
2. Mashed: smooth with a few soft, tiny lumps
3. Chopped: more soft lumps
4. Large pieces of soft, cooked food I can hold in my hand
5. Tiny pieces of cooked food I can pick up with my fingers



### Foods taste new to me.

I might spit it out or make a face. If I keep my mouth closed, do not force me to eat. Try again some other time.



## Give me safe food

Wash your hands and mine before you fix my food or feed me. Do not heat my food in a microwave oven. It causes hot spots in my food that could burn my mouth.

Put my food in a dish and feed it to me with a baby spoon or let me feed myself. Throw out any food left in the dish and breastmilk or formula left in the cup or bottle after feeding me.

### Do not give me foods I can choke on or get sick eating:

- hot dogs or meat stick
- hard candy
- peanuts
- raisins
- raw vegetables
- whole grapes
- honey or food made with honey
- bacon
- potato or corn chips
- fish with bones
- nuts
- bologna or deli meats
- popcorn



## Teach me to drink from a cup

I can try to drink from a cup at 6 months. Use a small cup with no lid, that does not break.

- I need practice! Put breastmilk, formula, or water in the cup. Lift the cup so it touches my lips and I get a taste. Hold the cup while I drink. Let me hold the cup when I want to.
- Do not give me punch, tea, or soda. The sugar hurts my teeth and is not what my body needs.

## Soon I will want to try and feed myself

At first, I will want to hold food with the palm of my hand.


- Please offer me large, soft strips of fruit, like banana or avocado, or large soft-cooked foods like carrot strips. Be sure they are soft enough for me to mash between my tongue and the roof of my mouth.



### I will get better at using my fingers

I will want to pick up tiny, bite sized pieces of soft foods like:

- Cooked vegetables or soft fruit.
- Cooked meat, chicken, turkey, or fish without bones.
- Mashed cooked beans, scrambled egg, or tofu.
- Rice or chopped cooked noodles.
- Toast, plain crackers, or soft tortillas.

Make pieces of food no bigger than this: 

## How much should I eat?

- Make sure I have breastmilk or formula at least 4 times a day.
- Start giving me 1 to 2 tablespoons of baby cereal, vegetables, fruit, or meat at some of my meals. Give me more if I am still hungry.
- Let me eat until I act full. I might close my lips, turn or shake my head, or raise my arm when I have had enough.
- Eat with me at our family meals. I eat better when you are with me. Let's turn off all our TVs, electronic games, and cell phones so we can talk.
- I am eating enough if the doctor says I am growing well.



## Let's play

Put me on a blanket on the floor. Put a toy just out of my reach so I can move to get it.

Show me a mirror. I like to look at myself! I like to laugh.

I want to put things in my mouth to learn about them.

I love to learn from you. Read and sing to me. Play peek-a-boo. Take me for a walk and talk about what we see.



## Look what I can do!

### 6 to 9 months

I can sit up and roll over. I creep and crawl. I like to bang things together, shake things, and drop them to see what happens.

### 9 to 12 months

I like to use my hands. I can hold my cup. I like to point and wave “bye-bye.” I can move my toys from one hand to another. I say “da-da” and “ma-ma.” I might be shy or afraid of strangers for a while.



## Keep me safe and healthy



- I need checkups and shots. Take me to the doctor at 6, 9, and 12 months.
- I must sit when I eat. Never leave me alone when I drink or eat or when you change or bathe me.
- If other people feed me, be sure to ask what and how much I ate.
- As my teeth come in, brush them front and back, with a small soft toothbrush and a smear of fluoride toothpaste twice a day, every day, especially before bed.
- Never put me to bed with a bottle or prop my bottle. I could choke, get an earache, or ruin my teeth.
- Let me explore and learn but make each room safe for me.
- Keep me away from smoke, matches, lighters, and vaping tools. I can be poisoned by swallowing, breathing, or absorbing e-cigarette liquid through my skin or eyes.
- If you own a gun, please keep it locked in a safe place.
- If there is marijuana in the house, especially edibles, please store it where I cannot get it. It can make me dizzy and fall over, sleep so I cannot wake up, and even stop breathing. Take me to the Emergency Room if this happens.
- Buckle me into an infant safety seat in the car. It's the law! Install my seat in the car's back seat, facing backwards.

## Be sure I sleep:

- Alone (even twins, triplets, or more) but near to you.
- On my back with my head uncovered, no pillow or blanket.
- In an empty bassinet, crib, or play yard with:
  - a firm mattress with a fitted sheet.
  - no bumpers, wedges, or sleep positioner.
  - no toys, mobiles, or crib gyms.

