




HELP ME BE HEALTHY



I AM 6-12 MONTHS



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. Throw out 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.

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.

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.



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