

How to provide balance nutrition to your baby

Infants can start eating solids from 4-6 months depending on their readiness. If your baby can sit well and has good head control and support, they are ready for complementary feeding. They should still receive breast milk or formula after complementary foods are introduced. It is recommended that mothers keep breastfeeding until the baby is 2 years old. Complementary feeding exposes the infant to the eating process and helps develop their eating skills.

Infant Nutrition

Breast milk or infant formulas provide infants the carbohydrates, fats and protein they need. However, they cannot provide all nutrients they need from 6 months onwards. Parents should provide iron-rich complementary food; **Iron** helps with cell growth and brain development. **Calcium** and **vitamin D** provide bone and teeth development. Parents can also include some **vitamin A**-rich vegetables and fruits in their diet for eye development and boosting the immune system. **Zinc** also helps boost the baby's immune system and aids cell growth and metabolism.

Precautions

Avoid adding salt, sugar, or other seasonings in infants' food. Avoid choking hazards before 3 years old, e.g. hotdogs, hard candy, popcorn, nuts, tough meats and grapes. Besides, avoid unpasteurized food like raw honey, yogurt or milk. Avoid juice or milk before 1 years old. Avoid other liquids besides breastmilk or formulas before 6 months.

Food allergy

The big 8: Egg, peanut, wheat, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, milk, soya and fish. Parents can start introducing allergens to baby from 6 months after less allergic foods are introduced. Recent studies showed more peanut allergy among children who did not receive peanuts early. For infants with severe eczema that have high risk of egg/peanut allergy, allergy testing is strongly advised.

If you have any concerns about allergens, please consult with your doctor.

4-6 months

Able to take in pureed or strained food.

- ★ Introduce 1 new food at a time to determine intolerance/allergies
 - Start with vegetables
- ★ Can include baby fortified cereals

6-8 months

Able to eat mashed food.

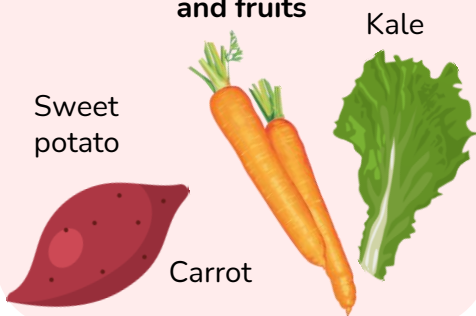
- ★ Recommend having 2-3 complementary feeding sessions per day
- ★ Start pureed meats at 6 mo
- ★ Recommend including iron and vitamin A-rich foods per day

8-12 months

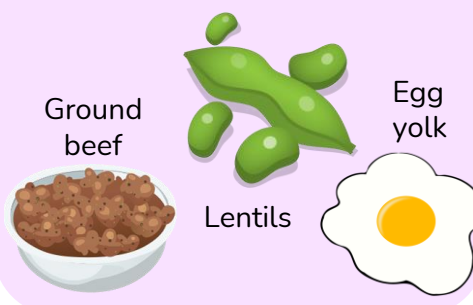
Able to eat ground or finely chopped foods.

- ★ Recommend having 3-4 complementary feeding sessions per day
- ★ Can add whole milk after 12 months
- ★ Wean from bottle to cup from 12-24 mo

Vitamin-A rich vegetables and fruits



Iron and zinc-rich foods



Calcium and vitamin D-Rich foods



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