## Birth to 6 Months

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, and that breastfeeding continue for at least 12 months and beyond.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Breast Milk or Iron-Fortified Infant Formula</th>
<th>Grain Products</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Protein-Rich Food</th>
<th>Water</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Birth to 6 months | Newborns breastfed: 8-12 times/day  
Formula-fed babies: 2-3 ounces of formula every 3-4 hours and by 6 months consume 32 ounces per day | None | None | None | None | Babies under 6 months of age should not be given extra water. Breast milk and/or formula provides all the fluid that the infant needs. |
| 6 to 8 months | Breastfed babies continue to breastfeed on demand  
Formula-fed babies take in about 24-32 ounces  
Intake of breast milk or formula may decrease as complementary foods increase | About 1-2 ounces of iron-fortified baby cereals, bread, or small pieces of crackers | About 2-4 ounces of cooked, plain, strained, pureed, or mashed vegetables | About 2-4 ounces of plain, strained, pureed, or mashed fruits | About 1-2 ounces meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cheese, yogurt, or legumes | Babies can have small amounts of water in an open cup once complementary foods are introduced. Check with a doctor to determine how much and how often water may be given. |
| 8 to 12 months | Guide and encourage breastfeeding mothers and continue to support mothers who choose breastfeeding beyond 12 months  
Formula-fed babies take in about 24 ounces  
Formula can be offered in a cup | About 2-4 ounces of iron-fortified baby cereals and other grains (e.g., baby crackers, bread, noodles, corn, grits, and soft tortilla pieces) | About 4-6 ounces, ground, finely chopped, or diced vegetables | About 4-6 ounces of ground, finely chopped, or diced fruits | About 2-4 ounces meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cheese, yogurt, or mashed legumes | All are ground, finely chopped, or diced |

**NOTE:** Information in this handout is a general guideline for the healthy and full-term baby. Serving sizes may vary with individual babies. For more information on feeding your baby, please contact your local agency, your baby’s doctor, or visit [https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/resources/infant-nutrition-and-feeding-guide](https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/resources/infant-nutrition-and-feeding-guide).
Feeding Tips for 0-6 months
• Babies need breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula for the first year.
• The bottle is for breast milk or formula only.
• Growth spurts are times when your baby may drink more breast milk or formula than usual. Growth spurts usually happen around 2-4 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months.
• Talk to your baby’s doctor about how and when to give a vitamin D supplement.

Introduction of Solid Foods
Feeding your baby solid foods is an exciting step. Wait until your baby is around 6 months of age to start solid foods. Your doctor may suggest starting earlier if your baby is showing signs of readiness. WIC does not provide food for your baby before 6 months of age.

Early introduction of solid foods before 4 months of age can:
• Cause choking.
• Cause a baby to drink less than the appropriate amount of breast milk or formula.
• Increase risk for obesity.

You will know your baby is ready for solid foods when he or she:
• Has head and neck control.
• Sits up, either alone or with some support.
• Opens the mouth when sees spoon approaching.
• Brings things to the mouth.
• Tries to grasp small objects (e.g., toys and food).
• Transfers food from the front to the back of the tongue to swallow.
• Swallows food rather than pushing it back out.

Tips for Starting Solid Foods:
• Always feed baby foods from a spoon.
• Start with baby foods such as iron-fortified cereal or baby meat. Baby cereals can be mixed with breast milk, formula, or water.
• Start with small servings of 0.5-1 ounce (approximately 1-2 tablespoons) once a day when your baby becomes developmentally ready at about 6 months and gradually increase amount.
• Introduce one new, single-ingredient food at a time to determine the baby’s acceptance of each food. Allow 3-5 days between the introduction of each new single-ingredient food to observe for possible allergic reactions.
• Introduce mixed grain cereals after your baby has tried each grain separately.
• Offer food your baby has refused again in a week or two. It may take more than 10 repeated exposures to a new food for your baby to accept the food.
• Watch for signs that your baby is full. Turning head away from food, closing mouth, pushing food away, and slowing down eating are signs your baby is full.

References: