For the first six months of your baby’s life, breast milk was all she needed to grow and be healthy.

Now, at about 6 months old, she is likely ready to eat solid foods. Breast milk is still the most important food, but you can now add solid foods during her feedings.

It is important to start with solid foods containing high amounts of iron first. Your baby uses iron for growth and development, especially for her brain and red blood cells. Your baby is born with iron stored in her body, but she uses this iron up by 6 months of age. Feeding her iron-rich foods will continue to give her the iron that she needs.

Solids foods will provide other nutrients, flavours and textures as well. These are all important for her overall growth and development.
## Introducing your Baby to Drinks

### What should my baby drink from 6 months to one year old?

| Milk                                      | Continue to feed your baby breast milk (or infant formula).  
|                                           | • **Do not** give your baby cow’s milk before he is 9 months to one year old. Talk to your doctor or dietitian before starting cow’s milk.  
|                                           | • Follow-up or stage 2 formulas are available for babies 6 to 18 months old. The calcium is higher in follow-up formulas compared to infant formula. There is no reason to switch to these formulas. |
| Water                                    | Sometimes your baby is not hungry, but is thirsty only. You can give your baby some water when he is thirsty and has already had his feeding. |
| Juice                                    | Babies do not need juice. After 6 months, if you choose to give juice, choose 100% unsweetened fruit juice. **Do not** give your baby more than 60 to 120 ml (2 to 4 ounces) of juice a day.  
|                                           | • You do not need to buy special baby juice, however make sure the juice is pasteurized.  
|                                           | • Most babies like fruit juice. If you give your baby too much juice, your baby may not drink enough breast milk (or infant formula) and will not get all the nutrition he needs to grow and be healthy. Make sure your baby gets all the breast milk, formula, or food he should have before you give your baby juice.  
|                                           | • Give your baby juice in a cup, not in a bottle. This will lower the risk of “baby bottle tooth decay” (rotten teeth). |
| Other drinks                             | **Do not** give your baby coffee, tea, herbal tea, pop, soft drinks, sports drinks, punch, fruit drinks, drinks made from drink crystals, or lemonade.  
|                                           | • These drinks are not safe for your baby.  
|                                           | • They can also fill up your baby’s stomach. Your baby may not drink enough breast milk (or infant formula) and will not get all the nutrition he needs to grow and be healthy. |

### Signs of Hunger
- Excited or happy to be in high chair
- Sucks or smacks lips
- Opens mouth when sees food
- Puts fist in mouth or cries
- Leans forward or reaches for food.

### Signs of Fullness
- Turns head away when sees spoon or food
- Closes mouth when sees spoon or food
- Covers mouth with hands or fists
- Fusses or cries
- Falls asleep.
Is my baby ready for solid foods?
At 6 months old, breast milk (or infant formula) is still the most important food for your baby, but now he will likely be ready to eat solid foods too. Start watching for signs that he is ready to do so. He will be more interested in eating if you both enjoy the process and if he is playing an active role in the feeding.

Your baby is ready to eat solids when he:
- Is about 6 months old
- Uses his neck muscles to hold his head up straight
- Sits up in a feeding chair
- Puts his fingers or toys in his mouth
- Opens his mouth wide when your offer food on a spoon
- Keeps his tongue flat and low so the spoon can go into his mouth
- Turns his face away if he does not want food
- Closes his lips over the spoon, keeps the food in his mouth and swallows it instead of pushing it out.

While you should make sure he shows all these signs of readiness before you start solid foods, do not wait too long to start. You may miss the developmental period that happens as he starts learning to eat solid foods. This may cause feeding problems later.

Solids give your baby the chance to learn new flavors (tastes) and textures. At first, your baby will start to eat puréed foods, then move to lumpy and thicker textures, before learning to eat small pieces of solid foods. By the end of the first year, she will be enjoying family meals and foods, using her fingers to pick up soft pieces of food, and drinking from a cup. Learning to eat over the next 6 months is a gradual transition led by your baby and taught by you.

Enjoy every moment!
When do I feed my baby?
• Continue to breast feed (or bottle feed) throughout the day.
• Give him solid food after he drinks breast milk (or infant formula).
• Feed him when he is happy and hungry.
• You may want to start new foods in the morning or at lunch.
• Include him at family meals.

Which foods do I start with?
Start with iron-rich foods, such as:
✓ Iron-fortified baby (infant) cereals
✓ Meat or Poultry such as beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey
✓ Fish
✓ Eggs
✓ Tofu
✓ Well-cooked legumes such as beans, lentils, and chickpeas.

How do I introduce foods to my baby?
1. Start with single foods, not mixed foods. Start with one new food at a time.
2. Wait about 2 days before introducing a new food. This is so that you can easily notice any signs of allergy.
3. As you introduce a new food, continue to offer the foods your baby has already tried and accepted.

Signs of allergy are:
• Rash
• Vomiting
• Diarrhea, or
• Breathing problems.

Stop feeding the food if it causes any of these problems. Talk to your doctor.

Call 911 if your baby is having trouble breathing.
**Introducing your Baby to Solid Foods**

**How should I prepare the foods to feed my growing baby?**

As your baby grows and develops, feed your baby age appropriate textures. The following will guide you through the stages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (Month)</th>
<th>Developmental Stage</th>
<th>Food Texture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Holds head up</td>
<td>Strained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sits with little help</td>
<td>Puréed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opens mouth when food is offered</td>
<td>Smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reaches out and is curious about food</td>
<td>Mashed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Is able to take food from a spoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Is able to move food to back of mouth with tongue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Can turn head away to refuse foods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Begins a chewing motion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Likes to finger feed</td>
<td>Grated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Can sit on own</td>
<td>Minced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is starting to crawl</td>
<td>Lumpy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can close mouth on cup rim</td>
<td>Diced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sips from a cup with help</td>
<td>Cut up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shows interest in feeding themselves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeds self with fingers</td>
<td>Soft foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tries to feed self with spoon</td>
<td>Finely chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tries to hold cup when drinking</td>
<td>Foods that soften or dissolve in the mouth. Examples are dry, toasted-oat cereal and unsalted, whole wheat crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accepts 4 to 5 sips from cup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bites and chews food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How do I feed my baby?**

| Sit together face-to-face | • Put her in a highchair or feeding chair.  
|                          | • Allow her to sit up straight, facing forward.  
|                          | • Use the safety belt.  
|                          | • Face each other - you sit directly in front of her.  
|                          | • Talk to her to keep her company, but do not be exciting or entertaining. Keep the mood calm and happy.  
|                          |  
|                          | It is safest to feed your baby in a feeding chair or high chair with safety belt. Never leave your baby alone.  

| Let your baby take the lead | • Put a small amount of food on the tip of a small spoon.  
|                            | • Hold the spoon for her to see it.  
|                            | • You can put some food on her lip if she does not open her mouth.  
|                            | • Wait for her mouth to open when you offer food.  
|                            | • Allow her to take the lead.  
|                            |  
|                            | Note: If she does not swallow the food, she may not be ready. Try again another day.  

| Let your baby set the pace | • Feed as slowly or as quickly as she wants.  
|                            | • Stop when she seems full.  
|                            | • Do not force her.  
|                            | • She does not need to finish what you made.  
|                            |  
|                            | Allow plenty of time for feeding. Do not rush. Both you and baby should be relaxed and happy at mealtimes. Eat together.  

| Let your baby play with the food | • She likes to touch and feel her food. Let her! Allow her to touch the food. This helps her become more familiar with new foods.  
|                                | • She likes to make a mess. This helps her learn.  

| Go slow with new foods | • Do not worry if she does not like a new food today. Try again another time.  
|                       | • Keep trying new foods, while continuing to feed her foods she already likes.  
|                       | • Just because you do not like a food, does not mean she won’t like it too.  

Introducing your Baby to Solid Foods

How much food should I give my baby?
Babies have small stomachs and need small amounts of foods at a time. Start by offering 1 to 2 teaspoons (5 to 10 mL) of food and gradually give more as baby accepts it.

Does my baby need vitamins?
Like all kinds of milk, breast milk does not have enough vitamin D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Everyday your baby drinks:</th>
<th>Give your baby this much vitamin D each day:</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only breast milk</td>
<td>400 IU (International Units)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 500 mL of formula</td>
<td>400 IU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Between 500 mL to 1000 mL of formula | 200 IU  
(Or you can give baby 400 IU every other day) | If you are partially breastfeeding your baby, the recommended amount of vitamin D supplement your baby should have depends on the amount of formula you are giving your baby. This is because infant formula contains some vitamin D. |
| 1000 mL or more of formula | You do not need to give additional vitamin D.|       |

Learning Healthy Habits
When a family eats together, babies learn that meal times are a special time to come together and share. Babies learn by watching others around them. Be a healthy role model.

Your baby:
• Needs the time to develop eating skills.
• Needs to explore eating as an experience.
• May take several tries of food before he may like it.
• Needs your attention and eye contact when feeding.
• Has an appetite that may vary day to day. Some days he eats more, sometimes less. That’s okay!

Learn to trust and respect signs of hunger and fullness. He knows how much to eat. Remember that every baby will like different foods and eat different amounts of foods.
Continue to breast feed your baby and start to give iron-rich foods (see summary list on page 4 and below for more details).

Babies need to learn to chew, swallow and enjoy the same food the family is eating. They will only need to eat puréed baby food for a short time.

**Between 6 and 7 months**, he can start to progress from puréed foods to well mashed, lumpy, and then finely chopped foods.

**By about 9 months old**, he can eat small, soft cooked pieces of finger foods (see summary finger foods list on next page).

### 1. Start with iron-rich foods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Food</th>
<th>DO</th>
<th>Do NOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Meat and Alternatives | • Cooked meat, chicken, lamb or fish that is moist. Add extra water or broth to cooking. Stewing or poaching works well.  
• Be sure to cook the egg well. Scrambled and mashed hard-boiled eggs are good options.  
• Cook beans, lentils, and chickpeas well  
• Use silken or soft tofu  
(Source: Toronto Public Health. A Guide to Eating Fish for Women, Children and Families) | • Do NOT give your baby deli meats, wieners, bologna, salami or sausage |
| Infant Cereal         | • Start with an iron-fortified, single-grain infant cereal, such as rice. Gradually, try other single grain cereals, such as oats, barley, and wheat.  
• Use mixed grains cereal only after your baby has tried each of the single grains.  
• Mix the dry cereal with breast milk. At first, make the cereal thin. As your baby becomes better at eating, make it thicker by adding less breast milk.  
• Some infant cereals have infant formula added. Read the labels. | • Do NOT give your baby adult cereals.  
• Do NOT give your baby cereal in a baby bottle. Always feed cereal from a spoon. |
2. After your baby has started to eat a variety of iron-rich foods, start to introduce foods such as vegetables and fruits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Food</th>
<th>DO</th>
<th>Do NOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Vegetables and Fruits | • Try one new vegetable or fruit at a time  
                          • Wash and peel fresh vegetables and fruit before using them  
                          • Give your baby cooked and mashed vegetables and fruit such as squash, peas, sweet potatoes, green or yellow beans, apples, peaches, pears, apricots, plums.  
                          • Try mashed bananas, avocados, melon and canned fruits  
                          • Give some pieces of soft fruits and cooked vegetables as your baby gets older. | • Do NOT give fruit desserts as they have a lot of sugar. Store-bought baby foods with combination vegetable and meat dinners have little nutrition. If you use them, add extra meat or alternatives to your baby's meal. |

When she starts to change what she is eating, such as beginning to eat solid foods, her bowel movements (poops) will change too. The poops may be more firm, a different colour, size or smell. She may have poops more or less often. If you are concerned about her poops, contact her doctor.

**How do I feed my baby finger foods?**

By 7 to 9 months, he will want to start to feed himself. Encourage him to self-feed using finger foods as soon as he seems interested. Continue to offer food from a spoon as he is learning to eat.

Some examples of finger foods are:

- Soft, ripe, peeled fruit cut into very small bite-sized pieces or strips (banana, pear, peaches, plums, mango, cantaloupe, melon, kiwi)
- Quartered grapes, pieces of strawberries, blueberries
- Soft, cooked vegetables pieces, cut into small pieces or into strips (carrots, sweet potato, turnip, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli)
- Dry toast strips, crackers
- Unsweetened cereals
- Shredded cheese, cheese cubes
- Cut-up cooked tender pieces of meat or chicken
- Ground meat (meatball pieces, cut-up meatloaf)
- Cut-up cooked pasta or casserole
- Small pieces of firm tofu
- Cooked beans, lentils, legumes

Finger foods are small pieces of foods that your baby can pick up and bring to his mouth using his fingers.

As she is learning to eat, she may gag or spit out food. This is normal. Keep trying to offer the food at another meal.
**Feeding your 6 to 9 Month Old Baby**

**Sample feeding schedule for my 6 to 9 month old baby**

- Continue to offer breast milk (or infant formula) before solid foods.
- Feed your baby when she is hungry. Every baby is different and schedules will be different.
- Always have baby sitting down for feeding and be with your baby.
- If she does not eat meat or alternatives, aim for 120 mL (8 tablespoons) of iron-fortified cereal every day by 9 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Early Morning| Breast milk (or infant formula): 180 to 240 mL (6 to 8 ounces)  
Vitamin D supplement if drinking breast milk |
| Breakfast    | Breast milk (or infant formula): 6 to 8 ounces (180 to 240 mL)  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) iron-fortified infant cereal  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) cooked egg  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) mashed fruit such as pear |
| Morning Snack| Breast milk (or infant formula): 180 to 240 mL (6 to 8 ounces) |
| Lunch        | Breast milk (or infant formula): 180 to 240 mL (6 to 8 ounces)  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) iron-fortified infant cereal  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) mashed vegetable such as yellow beans  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) minced chicken |
| Afternoon Snack| Breast milk (or infant formula): 180 to 240 mL (6 to 8 ounces) |
| Dinner       | Breast milk (or infant formula): 180 to 240 mL (6 to 8 ounces)  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) iron-fortified infant cereal  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) mashed fruit such as peaches or banana  
5 to 30 mL (1 tsp to 2 tbsp) minced meat |
| Evening Snack| Breast milk (or infant formula): 180 to 240 mL (6 to 8 ounces) |

**How many meals and snacks a day does my baby need?**

As they start getting used to eating solids, your baby may only eat a few meals a day. At 6 to 9 months of age, offer 1 to 3 meals each day.
Feed your 9 to 12 Month Old Baby

As your baby gets older, continue to increase the texture and variety of foods you offer. When she is eating a variety of solid foods, give breast milk (or infant formula) after solid foods at mealtimes.

By about 9 months old, your baby can pick things up with her thumb and forefinger (pincer grasp). This is the time to offer small pieces of table foods or “finger foods” for snack and at mealtimes. To keep your baby safe, be sure to know which foods to avoid (see page 16 - Foods that can cause choking).

By one year of age, your baby should be eating table food that the rest of the family is enjoying. You should not have to cook a separate meal. She should be eating bite-sized pieces of food. She should be eating a variety of foods from all food groups and drinking liquids from a cup.

### Tips

**Food Group** | **Tips**
---|---
Vegetables and Fruit | • There is no set order for which vegetables and fruits to offer  
| | • Offer vegetables and fruits that the rest of the family is eating  
Grain Products | • Continue to give iron-fortified infant cereal  
| | • If you wish, mix infant cereal with other foods, such as fruit or vegetables  
| | • Offer finger foods such as:  
| | • Pieces of bagel  
| | • Dry toast strips  
| | • Roti, naan, chapatti  
| | • Noodles  
| | • Cooked pasta  
| | • Unsalted crackers  
| | • Baby biscuits

Let her feed herself with her hands or a baby spoon. Expect a mess. This is how she learns to eat well. Make sure her hands are clean before eating. There is no need to wipe while she is eating.

Turn off the TV or computer and any distractions such as toys or books. Eating is a time of learning. Distractions while eating or feeding can cause difficulty with feeding and over time, may lead to picky eating. Eat together. Babies learn by watching others.
### Feeding your 9 to 12 Month Old Baby

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Milk and Alternatives** | • Breast milk (or infant formula) is still the most important food for your baby. Continue to breast feed until your baby is 2 year old or older.  
• If your baby is eating a variety of iron-rich foods (such as, fortified infant cereal, meat, poultry, fish, beans and eggs) at most mealtimes, you can offer your baby homogenized (whole fat homogenized / 3.25% M.F.) cow’s milk.  
• If she is not eating a variety of foods that contain iron, then do not start feeding her whole fat (homogenized / 3.25% M.F.) milk. Keep giving her breast milk (or infant formula with iron) and continue offering iron-rich foods to baby.  
• When you have weaned your baby to whole fat (homogenized / 3.25% M.F.) milk, continue with this milk until your baby is 2 years old. Then, you can switch to lower-fat milk.  
• Give milk in a cup.  
• Offer sugar-free or plain yogurt, cottage cheese, and small cubes or soft cheese or shredded cheese.  
• Be sure that all milk products are pasteurized. |
| **Meat and Alternatives** | • Bite-sized pieces of tender boneless cooked meat, such as chicken, beef, lamb, pork, or fish  
• Cooked eggs such as scrambled eggs, omelet or hard-boiled eggs  
• Well-cooked, soft beans, lentils, chickpeas  
• Plain tofu (fortified)  
• Thinly spread peanut butter or other nut butters on toast or crackers |

---

**STOP**

- **Do not** give your baby skim milk, 1% milk, or 2% milk in the first 2 years of life. Your baby needs the calories and fat in whole fat (homogenized / 3.25% M.F.) milk to grow strong and healthy.
- **Do not** give your baby soy or rice drinks in the first 2 years of life. They do not have enough protein, healthy fat, or calories to help babies grow and develop.
- **Do not** give your baby unpasteurized milk (milk that has not been treated to get rid of germs). Unpasteurized milk can cause diarrhea and other serious health problems.
### Feeding your 9 to 12 Month Old Baby

#### Sample feeding schedule for my 9 to 12 month old baby

- Feed your baby when she is hungry. Every baby is different and schedules will be different.
- Always have baby sitting down for feeding and be with your baby.
- When your baby is eating a variety of solid foods, give breast milk (or infant formula) **after** solid foods at mealtimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Meal Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breakfast</strong></td>
<td>Breast milk (or infant formula): 120 to 180 mL (4 to 6 ounces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 to 90 mL (4 to 6 tbsp) iron-fortified infant cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 to 60 mL (2 to 4 tbsp) fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morning Snack</strong></td>
<td>60 mL (1/4 cup) Cheerios or other cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breast milk (or infant formula): 120 to 180 mL (4 to 6 ounces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
<td>30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 tbsp) of meat or alternative such as chicken or lentils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 tbsp) vegetables such as yellow beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 to 90 mL (4 to 6 tbsp) cut up noodles or pasta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 to 60 mL (2 to 4 tbsp) fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breast milk (or infant formula): 120 to 180 mL (4 to 6 ounces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon Snack</strong></td>
<td>30 to 60 mL (2 to 4 tbsp) yogurt or cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
<td>30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 tbsp) of meat or alternative such as chicken or lentils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 tbsp) vegetables such as green peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60 to 90 mL (4 to 6 tbsp) cut up noodles, pasta, potato or rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 to 60 mL (2 to 4 tbsp) fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breast milk (or infant formula): 120 to 180 mL (4 to 6 ounces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evening Snack</strong></td>
<td>60 to 90 mL (4 to 6 tbsp) iron-fortified infant cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breast milk (or infant formula): 120 to 240 mL (4 to 8 ounces)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How many meals and snacks a day does my baby need?

- At 9 to 11 months old - Offer 2 to 3 meals and 1 to 2 snacks each day
- At 12 month old - Offer 3 meals and 2 to 3 snacks each day
What do I need to know about food allergies?
Your baby is more likely to have a food allergy if one or both parents, brothers or sisters have allergies, asthma or eczema.

- There is a lack of research to delay introducing solid foods beyond 6 months.
- Some parents wait to introduce some foods until the child is able to communicate that their lips or tongue feel funny or that it is hard to breathe (signs of an allergic reaction). It is up to you to decide when you feel comfortable offering foods like peanut butter to your child. Review the safety tips to prevent choking (page 16).
- Introduce only one new food at a time. Watch for allergic reactions. Wait about 2 days before you introduce a new food. This way, if your baby has an allergy to a food, you will know which food caused the allergy.

What are some general tips to keep my baby safe during feedings?
- Be very careful if you heat your baby’s food in the microwave. Before serving it to your baby, stir the food well and check the temperature carefully.
- Check that your baby’s high chair is stable and secure. Always use the safety belt.
- Do not hold your baby when you are eating or drinking anything hot.
- Babies can choke easily. Always stay with your baby while eating.

What are some safe food handling tips?
Young children and infants are at more of a risk from getting sick from food poisoning. This is because their immune systems are still developing and they are not as ready to fight off infections as adults are.

Baby’s Teeth
Before baby’s teeth appear, wipe her gums with a soft cloth. To prevent tooth decay (rotten teeth) as soon as baby’s teeth appear:
- Begin brushing each day with a baby toothbrush, especially before sleeping.
- Check baby’s teeth often for signs of tooth decay such as white lines along the gum line or brown spots.
- Talk to your doctor or dental-health professional for specific fluoride recommendations.
- Always stay with your baby during feeding, and do not use a propped bottle.
- Do not give your baby bottles of milk at sleep time without brushing afterwards.
- Do not give bottles to your baby while he is sleeping.
- Avoid giving juice or other sweet drinks, especially from a bottle.

Symptoms of food poisoning can include:
- Stomach aches
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (runny, watery poops) and/or
- Fever

Infants and children can quickly become dehydrated. Be sure to contact your health care professional.

A child has a fever when the temperature is at or above one of these levels:
- 38°C (100.4°F) - measured in the bottom (rectally)
- 37.5°C (99.5°F) - measured in the mouth (orally)
- 37.2°C (99°F) - measured under the arm (axillary)
To prevent food poisoning, below is a list of food handling safety tips to follow. For more information on food safety from children, aged 5 and under, visit [http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/safety-salubrite/children-under-5-moins-enfant-eng.php](http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/safety-salubrite/children-under-5-moins-enfant-eng.php)

### Food Handling Safety Tips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Separate</th>
<th>• Keep raw meat, chicken, fish and seafood separate from ready-to-eat foods such as fruits and vegetables in the fridge and in your grocery carts to avoid cross-contamination.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Clean     | • Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before preparing food, before and after feeding your baby, after changing his diaper and after touching pets.  
|           | • Clean all surfaces, utensils, equipment with hot water and soap before and after preparing food.  
|           | • Rinse fruits and vegetables under cold running drinkable water.  
|           | • Wash your baby’s hands and face before and after eating.  |
| Chill     | • Defrost raw meat, chicken, fish and seafood in the fridge, microwave or in cold water.  
|           | • **Do not** refreeze thawed foods.  
|           | • Store raw meat, chicken, fish or seafood right away in fridge or freezer at the right temperatures. Fridge should be set to 4°C (40°F) or lower and freezer at -18°C (0°F) or lower.  
|           | • Store cut-up fruit and vegetables in the fridge.  
|           | • Store leftovers in the fridge. Store as soon as possible; at least within 2 hours.  
|           | • Throw away any leftovers that baby has started to eat but not finished.  |
| Cook      | • Be sure to cook your food thoroughly and safely.  
|           | • Check the internal temperature of meat, chicken, fish, seafood and leftovers using a digital food thermometer to avoid food poisoning.  |

#### Safe Internal Cooking Temperatures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef, veal and lamb (pieces and whole cuts)</td>
<td>77°C (170°F)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Ground meat                   | 71°C (160°F) beef, veal, lamb, pork  
|                               | 74°C (165°F) poultry (chicken, turkey)  
| Poultry (chicken, turkey, duck) | 74°C (165°F) pieces  
|                               | 85°C (185°F) whole  
| Pork                          | 71°C (160°F) |
| Egg dishes                    | 74°C (165°F)  |
| Others (hot dogs, stuffing, seafood) | 74°C (165°F)  |

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Keeping your Baby Safe

What foods are unsafe for my baby to eat?

Foods high in mercury: Do not give your baby swordfish, shark, fresh or frozen tuna steak, canned albacore (white) tuna, marlin, orange roughy or escolar more than once a month - These fish are often high in mercury. For more information on fish safety visit: http://www1.toronto.ca/staticfiles/city_of_toronto/toronto_public_health/healthy_public_policy/fish_and_mercury/files/pdf/guide_eat_fish.pdf (Source: Toronto Public Health. A Guide to Eating Fish for Women, Children and Families)

Foods high in sodium (salt) or sugar: Avoid giving your baby foods that are high in sodium (salt) and sugar. Too much salt is hard on her kidneys. Sugary foods and drinks do not give her the nutrition she needs, can cause excess weight gain and can cause tooth decay.

Foods high in salt or sugar include:

- Soft drinks (such as ginger ale, cola, Sprite®, iced tea, sports drinks)
- Pickles, olives
- Chips, Cheesies®
- Canned or instant soups, noodles or pasta

Candy, chocolate
- Jell-O®, ice-cream, sweet desserts
- Processed meats such as hot dogs, deli meats
- Sugar coated cereals
- Fast foods such as salted French fries, hamburgers

Foods that can cause choking: Certain food textures can cause choking. As your baby is learning to chew and swallow, she may gag or spit out the food, this is normal. Choking, however, is dangerous. Avoid or change foods that are choking hazards until she is 3 or 4 years old and is able to chew and swallow well. Be sure to learn what to do if your baby is choking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foods that can cause choking</th>
<th>How to make them safer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stringy, melted cheese</td>
<td>Give cut up or shredded pieces of cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long pasta</td>
<td>Cut up noodles, small pasta pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foods that stick (cheese spread, cream cheese, peanut butter)</td>
<td>Spread thinly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round small fruits (grapes, cherries)</td>
<td>Cut into four parts, remove pit or seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot dogs, wiener, sausages</td>
<td>Avoid giving. If you choose to, cut lengthwise and then again into bite-sized pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw vegetables or fruit that are hard</td>
<td>Cook to soften or offer grated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw baby carrots</td>
<td>Cook to soften, cut lengthwise and then again into small bite-sized pieces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do not give the following foods until your child is 4 years old: Hard candies, nuts, seeds, popcorn, fish with bones, raisins, gum, snacks with toothpicks or skewers
**Keeping your Baby Safe**

**Foods that can cause food poisoning:** Avoid feeding your baby foods that can cause food poisoning. The following are unsafe for your baby:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Food</th>
<th>Food to AVOID</th>
<th>Safer Alternative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dairy Products</td>
<td>• Raw or unpasteurized milk.</td>
<td>• Pasteurized milk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey</td>
<td>• Honey or corn syrup to infants who are less than one year old, either added to baby food or used on a soother. They can cause infant botulism.</td>
<td>• Wait until your child is older than one year. If you are looking for a way to quiet a fussy or colicky baby, ask your doctor for some alternative methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Dogs</td>
<td>• Hot dogs straight from the package without further heating.</td>
<td>• Hot dogs thoroughly cooked to a safe internal temperature. The middle of the hot dog should be steaming hot or 74°C (165°F).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg and Egg Products</td>
<td>• Raw or lightly cooked eggs or egg products, including salad dressings, cookie dough or cake batter, sauces and drinks such as homemade eggnog</td>
<td>• Egg dishes thoroughly cooked to a safe internal temperature. Eggs should be cooked until the yolk is firm. Homemade eggnog must be heated to 71°C (160°F).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafood</td>
<td>• Raw oysters, clams and mussels.</td>
<td>• Cook until the shell has opened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Raw seafood such as sushi.</td>
<td>• Seafood cooked to a safe internal temperature of 74°C (165°F).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Refrigerated smoked seafood.</td>
<td>• Smoked seafood in cans that do not require refrigeration until after opening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>• Swordfish, shark, fresh or frozen tuna steak, canned albacore (white) tuna, marlin, orange roughly or escolar – do not give more than once a month. These fish are often high in mercury.</td>
<td>• For more information on fish safety visit: [<a href="http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/conten">http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/conten</a> tonly?venextoid=82a2ebfc2bb31410VgnVCM10000071d6089RCRD Source:Toronto Public Health, Fish and Mercury](<a href="http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/conten">http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/conten</a> tonly?venextoid=82a2ebfc2bb31410VgnVCM10000071d6089RCRD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and Poultry</td>
<td>• Raw or undercooked meat or poultry such as steak tartare.</td>
<td>• Meat and poultry cooked to a safe internal temperature. (Refer to the Internal Cooking Temperatures Chart on pg. 14.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit Juice and Cider</td>
<td>• Unpasteurized fruit juice and cider.</td>
<td>• Unpasteurized fruit juice and cider brought to a rolling boil and cooled. Pasteurized fruit juice and cider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprouts</td>
<td>• Raw sprouts such as alfalfa, clover, radish and mung beans.</td>
<td>• Thoroughly cooked sprouts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Can I make my own baby food?

Yes. It is easy to make your own baby food. You can use the same healthy foods you and your family eat. Homemade baby food is healthy for your baby. It also:

- Saves you money
- Lets her try a greater variety of foods
- Helps her get used to different textures and tastes
- Lets her eat the same foods as your family.

You can make baby food at each meal or ahead of time and store it in the fridge or freezer.

You will not need puréed or blended foods for long. At about seven months old, most babies will be eating mashed table foods and quickly move on to soft pieces of table food.

How do I make baby food?

To make baby food you will need one of the following:

- A food blender or
- A baby food mill (grinder) or
- A wire sieve and a clean spoon or
- A potato masher or
- A fork

1. **Be clean**
   - Wash your hands with warm, soapy water before you prepare food.
   - Clean all surfaces and equipment with hot water and soap.

2. **Choose fresh or frozen foods**
   - Do not use canned foods as they have too much salt for your baby.
### 3. Prepare the foods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>How to Prepare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables and Fruit</td>
<td>• Wash, peel, pit and/or seed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cut into smaller pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Steam or boil until soft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Drain and save the cooking water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mash or blend. You may need to use some cooking water to get the right texture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• You can mash banana, papaya, avocado and melon without cooking them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Do not</strong> add sugar, salt, butter or margarine to the food. Baby does not need these.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and Fish</td>
<td>• Boil, roast, or bake until the meat separates easily from the bones or the fish flakes easily with a fork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Remove bones and skin, trim off the fat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cut meat or flake fish into small pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Blend. You may need to use some cooking water to get the right texture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do not add sugar, salt, butter or margarine to the food. Baby does not need these.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat Alternatives</td>
<td>• Cook legumes such as beans, lentils and chickpeas according to package directions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cook egg yolk. Use plain tofu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Blend with a little water or mash with a fork.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Store the prepared foods

- Store prepared baby food in a covered container. You can store in the refrigerator for 2 days.
- You can freeze homemade baby food. Pour pureed food into an ice cube tray. Thaw frozen cubes in the refrigerator before using.
- You can store homemade baby food in a refrigerator freezer for 2 months or deep freezer for 6 months.
If you have questions about feeding your baby, please contact:

Humber River Hospital
Maternal and Child Program
Web: http://www.hrh.ca
Registered Dietitian
Tel: (416) 242-1000 ext. 45113
Paediatric Nutrition Clinic
Paediatric Outpatient Clinic
Tel: (416) 242-1000 ext. 21400

Dietitians of Canada
Tel: (416) 596-0857
Web: http://www.dietitians.ca

Eat Right Ontario
Toll-free: 1 (877) 510-510-2
Web: http://www.eatrightontario.ca

La Leche League Canada
Breastfeeding line for a referral to someone in your community
Toll-free: 1 (800) 665-4324
Web: http://www.lllc.ca

Motherisk Helpline
Tel: (416) 813-6780
Web: http://www.motherisk.org

Toronto Public Health
Tel: (416) 338-7600
Web: http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=a253ba2ae8b1e310VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD