Breast Milk or Infant Formula?

Breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula has everything your baby needs until 6 months of age. Most babies will drink about this much each day (24 hours):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>0 MONTH</th>
<th>1–2 MONTHS</th>
<th>2–3 MONTHS</th>
<th>4–5 MONTHS</th>
<th>5–6 MONTHS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WEIGHT</td>
<td>5 1/2</td>
<td>6 1/2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10 1/2</td>
<td>11 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANGE</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 lbs.</td>
<td>14 1/2 lbs.</td>
<td>16 1/2 lbs.</td>
<td>20 lbs.</td>
<td>21 lbs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREAST</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MILK</td>
<td>8–12 times</td>
<td>7–10 times</td>
<td>6–9 times</td>
<td>6–8 times</td>
<td>6–8 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRON</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
<td>on demand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Breast milk is recommended for at least the first year of life, and exclusive breastfeeding is strongly recommended for the first four to six months.

How Fast Will Baby Grow?

- Baby will have many growth spurts during the first year. (You can tell she’s having a growth spurt when she eats more at a time, or eats more often.)
- Birthweight usually doubles at about 5 months.
- Birthweight usually triples by baby’s first birthday.
Getting Ready for Solids

By 6 months, most babies will show signs that they are ready to start solid foods. Begin introducing solids from a spoon when your baby is developmentally ready. Watch for these signs and write in the date that you first see them.

- Sits up with support
- Holds head steady
- Reaches for objects and holds on to them
- Stops pushing tongue out when lips are touched
- Opens mouth for spoon, closes mouth over spoon and begins to swallow

If your baby is not showing these signs by 6 months, talk to the nurse or doctor at your next visit.

Starting Cereal

Around 6 months, your baby will need extra iron to grow. Iron-fortified infant cereal is the best choice. Rice cereal is best to start with, because most babies can eat it without any problems.

- Chose a feeding time when baby is happy, and just give half the usual amount of breast milk or formula. (Hold your baby in your arms—babies do better when they feel safe.)
- Start with equal parts cereal and liquid, increase thickness as baby desires.
- Offer 1–2 spoonfuls of cereal and watch baby’s reaction. She’ll let you know if she’s ready for more.
- Take it slow, be patient, and let your baby take the lead.
- Offer the other breast or the rest of the formula, and end the feeding on a happy note.

Baby will eat about this much each day:
By 6 months: 3–5 tablespoons prepared cereal
6–9 months: 4–10 tablespoons prepared cereal
Vegetables & Fruits

Solid foods will begin to replace some feedings, but they can’t replace all the nutrients provided by breast milk and iron-fortified formula.

Many people introduce vegetables and fruits between 6 and 8 months, after baby has learned to eat cereal.

- Offer one new vegetable or fruit a week. Watch for any allergic reaction, such as rash, diarrhea, runny nose, wheezing, itching, or swelling of mouth, lips or tongue.
- Offer 1 teaspoon of vegetable or fruit to start.
- Start with strained or pureed vegetables and work toward a thicker mixture with a few lumps. Once baby has tried a number of vegetables and fruits, then try different textures.
- Next, try vegetables mashed with a fork, and then soft pieces of cooked vegetable that can be eaten with a spoon or fingers.
- At 6 months, baby can begin to learn to drink water from a cup. Drinking from a cup is an important skill and can help prevent tooth decay that occurs from too much bottle use. Between 6 and 8 months, your baby can drink up to 2–4 ounces of water or juice a day. (You can get juice from WIC after baby is 6 months old.) Work towards the goal of weaning your baby to drinking only from a cup by 12 to 15 months.
- Wait to offer citrus fruits and juices until after 9 months because your baby could get a rash if given citrus earlier.
- Wait to offer honey until 1 year, as your baby can get very sick from the bacteria that may be in honey.

Protein Foods

- Meats, beans, lentils, egg yolks, yogurt, tofu and cottage cheese
- Offer 1 new protein food a week.
- Offer 1 teaspoon to start increasing to 2 tablespoons twice a day.
- Wait to offer egg whites until 1 year, as they may cause an allergic reaction.

Let Your Baby Listen to You

Read, talk and sing to your child. He may not know the words, but he will love the sound of your voice!
This will help him to learn better when he is older.
Mealtime is a great time to talk to your baby. Tell him that his applesauce is cold and sweet. The carrots in his bowl are warm. The cereal on his tray is round and crunchy.
Sample Menu 6–8 months

Breakfast
- Rice cereal (infant, iron-fortified) made with breast milk, formula or water, 1/4 cup
- Banana, ripe, mashed, 2–3 tablespoons
- Breast milk or iron-fortified formula, 8 oz.

Mid-morning snack
- Toast, whole grain, 1/4 slice
- Apple juice, 2–4 oz. (from cup)

Lunch
- Yogurt, 1–2 tablespoons
- Winter squash, pureed, 2–3 tablespoons
- Pears, strained or cut up, 2–3 tablespoons
- Breast milk or iron-fortified formula, 6 oz.

Mid-afternoon snack
- Dry cereal, 1 tablespoon
- Water from a cup

Dinner
- Oatmeal or cereal (infant, iron-fortified), made with breast milk, formula or water, 1/4 cup
- Peas, pureed or mashed, 2–3 tablespoons
- Breast milk or iron-fortified formula, 6 oz.

Evening snack
- Breast milk or iron-fortified formula, 8 oz.