



Goodlettsville Pediatrics

NUTRITION AND YOUR BABY

From Birth to Twelve Months

0-4 MONTHS: In these first few months of life a baby grows at an incredible rate – faster than he will at any other time in his life! Most babies will double their birth weight before the age of 5 months. Try to imagine yourself doubling in size over the next 5 months! The growth of a baby is really miraculous. Because of this rapid growth, proper nutrition is of paramount importance. The best diet for babies 0-4 months consists of **breast milk and/or formula exclusively.**

4-8 MONTHS: During this period, growth slows slightly but is still rapid. Breast milk and/or formula should remain your baby's predominant source of nutrition, but now is a good age to slowly introduce some solid foods. By 9-12 months of age your baby should be eating 3 good meals daily and breast milk or formula will play a lesser role in his overall nutrition. We recommend starting solids at 4 months in formula fed babies and at 6 months in breast fed babies.

Tradition has most mothers start with cereals, then move to vegetables and fruits. A suggested schedule would be as follows:

First, BABY CEREAL

Offer one new cereal each week. Start with rice and later try oatmeal, barley or mixed. Begin with 2-3 teaspoons twice daily and work up to 4-5 tablespoons twice daily (build from thin to mushy). Mix cereals with formula, breast milk or water.

Second, SINGLE STRAINED VEGETABLES

Offer only one new vegetable each 4-5 days. Begin with a green vegetable (peas, green beans, spinach) and alternate with a yellow vegetable (squash, carrots, sweet potatoes). Begin with 2-3 teaspoons 1-2 times daily and work up to 1-2 jars daily.

Third, SINGLE STRAINED FRUIT

Offer one new fruit every 4-5 days (applesauce, bananas, pears, peaches, prunes). Begin with 2-3 teaspoons 1-2 times daily and build to 1-2 jars daily.

Fruit juices (mainly apple or apple combinations) may be offered anytime after 4 months of age. It is often good to dilute juices with water thereby decreasing your baby's sugar intake and increasing your baby's water and fluoride intake.

Mixed vegetables and mixed fruits should be started after your baby has tried all the vegetables and fruits individually.

As you add more foods to your baby's diet, you will be able to plan a regular daily menu of 2 to 3 meals a day. Perhaps fruit and cereal for breakfast, fruit and vegetables for lunch and vegetables and cereal for dinner.

NOTE: Baby food desserts are not recommended.

Remember breast milk or formula should remain your baby's primary source of calories through 9 months.

Your baby should take a minimum of 20-25 oz. daily or nurse at least 3-4 times in 24 hours.

8-9 MONTHS: This is a good time to start other sources of protein such as meats (beef, chicken, turkey, veal and lamb) and egg yolks. Egg whites are highly allergenic and should be reserved for children 12 months of age and older.

Strained Individual Meats: Offer one new meat every 5 days. Start with chicken. Begin with 2-3 teaspoons and build up to ½ jar 1-2 times daily. May be offered straight from the jar or mixed with a fruit or vegetable.

Mixed Meat Dinners: Meat dinners have less total protein per jar and more fillers. Individual meats are preferable and assure that your baby gets adequate protein. However, some babies take these combination products better. Just remember they must take more to get the same amount of protein (ex. Chicken and noodles, turkey and vegetables, etc.).

Egg Yolks: Egg yolks may be home prepared by boiling an egg and separating out the yolk. Strained yolks in jars are also available for purchase with the other baby foods.

9-12 MONTHS: During this period most babies are able to start some lumpy junior foods, some soft table foods and some finger foods. Most babies are eating three good meals a day and formula or breast milk will no longer be their primary source of nutrition. After 12 months your baby should be like an adult in that our primary source of nutrition is food and not milk. Formula should be replaced by whole or 2% cow's milk at 12 months. To help with weaning, it is recommended that cow's milk be started in a cup.

Mashed Table Foods and Finger Foods: Soft cooked carrots, green beans, potatoes and bananas are good starter foods. Naturally soft foods such as yogurt (plain or mixed with baby food fruits) and cottage cheese may be offered. Crackers and dry cereals (Cheerios, Rice Chex) make good finger foods.

NOTE: There is no hurry to move to table foods. Baby foods offer more variety, have less added salt and sugar and are easier to prepare.

WARNING: Do not give a child less than 4 years food with a high risk of choking. These include raw carrots, raw apple, meat chunks, hot dogs, hard candies, peanuts, raisins, grapes and popcorn. Do not give honey to a child less than a year old. This can cause botulism.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

www.goodpeds.com

FOR PRACTICE INFORMATION
BIOGRAPHIES OF ALL OUR PHYSICIANS
PATIENT SERVICES
EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS