



What you need to know about Feeding your 4-month-old

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT YOUR BABY'S 4-MONTH VISIT:

- How do I know if my baby is hungry or full?
- Is my baby eating enough?
- Is my baby ready for solid foods?

1 TRUST YOUR BABY'S HUNGER AND FULLNESS CUES.

As your baby grows, it is important to continue to learn and make adjustments to new behaviors and needs. And remember: Your baby knows exactly how much he needs to eat.

HUNGER CUES:

Putting fingers in his mouth

Leaning toward or grabbing for the breast or bottle

Crying or fussing

(This could also mean your baby is too hot or cold, needs to sleep, needs his diaper changed or needs to be comforted.)

FULLNESS CUES:

Turning his attention away from eating

Using the breast or bottle nipple as a pacifier

Sealing his lips closed

Falling asleep

Is your baby eating enough?

If your baby is growing well and having enough wet diapers (at least six a day), then he is probably getting enough to eat. If you still are not sure, talk to your baby's doctor.

2 WATCH FOR SIGNS THAT YOUR BABY IS READY FOR SOLID FOODS.

How do you know your baby is ready for solids?

Your baby may be ready for solid foods if he:

- Sits with support and has good head and neck control
- Opens his mouth for the spoon and closes mouth over the spoon
- Can move food from the spoon into his mouth and swallow (without pushing the food back out)
- Seems interested in the foods you eat



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WHEN YOUR BABY IS READY, START WITH IRON-RICH FOODS.

Which foods should you try first?

Iron is an essential nutrient for your baby's brain development and overall growth, and babies most often use up the iron that is stored in their bodies by about 6 months old.

- First, try iron-rich foods, such as iron-fortified infant cereal or pureed meat.
- Next, add a single pureed vegetable, such as green peas or carrots to help your baby's taste buds get used to veggies.

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BE PATIENT, TURN OFF SCREENS AND EXPECT A MESS.

What's the best way to introduce your baby to solids?

- Make sure he is able to sit up in the high chair and hold up his head.
- Your baby may make funny faces or even spit out a food, but that doesn't mean he doesn't like it. He is just reacting to a new taste, texture and experience. Continue to offer new foods many times.
- Your baby may get more food on his bib than in his mouth, but that is OK. **A messy baby is a learning baby**, so be patient as your baby learns this new life skill.
- Make eye contact with your baby and make feeding time distraction-free so you can easily recognize and respond to your baby's cues. That means no toys, screens (such as cellphones, computers and the TV) or airplane spoons to deliver food into his mouth.

Did you know?



The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends only breastmilk for the first six months and continuing to breastfeed until your baby is 1 year old.

No juice zone

- Fruit juice (even 100%) has a lot of sugar and can cause diarrhea, diaper rash and tooth decay.
- Your baby's kidneys are still developing and cannot handle anything else, so he does not need fruit juice (or water).

What to expect next:

- Over the next two months, as your baby continues to grow and develop new skills, you may need to adjust your current routine based on his new eating or sleeping behaviors.
- Look forward to helping your baby explore solid foods, transition to different food textures and learn how to feed himself.

Doctor's notes: