



What you need to know about Feeding your 9-month-old

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QUESTIONS TO ASK AT YOUR BABY'S 9-MONTH VISIT:

- How do I know if my baby is hungry or full?
- Why should my baby be trying a variety of new foods and new textures?
- Should my baby be drinking anything other than breastmilk, formula or water?

1 PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR BABY'S HUNGER AND FULLNESS CUES.

Your baby still knows exactly how much he needs to eat—even with solid foods. Continue to trust your baby's hunger and fullness cues.

HUNGER CUES:

Grabbing for breast, bottle or food on the table

Pointing to food or feeding spoon

Moving hands to mouth, crying or fussing

FULLNESS CUES:

Pushing away the breast, bottle or plate of food

Turning attention away from eating or playing with food and not eating it

Throwing food on the floor or handing food back to you

2 SERVE YOUR BABY A VARIETY OF SOLID FOODS AND TEXTURES.

Your baby may start to show signs that he's ready to feed himself. Self-feeding allows him to respond to his hunger and fullness cues, building the foundation for future healthy eating.

What you need to know about different flavors and textures:

- It is important to serve your baby a variety of soft veggies and fruits at meals and snacks. Veggies and fruits are packed with vitamins, minerals and fiber he needs to grow and better digest food.
- Switching your baby from pureed foods to new textures—such as soft, diced and chopped—will help him learn how to chew and swallow better.
- Your baby may refuse a new food the first time he tries it, and that's OK. Some babies need to be introduced to a new food 15 to 20 times before they will accept it.

- Your baby may make faces when he's trying new tastes and textures, but this doesn't mean he dislikes a particular food.
- Like adults, babies may enjoy a food one day and not want it the next. Offering a variety of foods every day will help ensure your baby gets the nutrition he needs.

How to safely feed your baby solids:

- Keep a close eye on your baby when he is eating.
- To avoid choking, serve soft-texture foods diced into small, pea-sized pieces.
- Foods that are small and round (such as grapes or hot dog slices), sticky (such as peanut butter or candy) or tough (such as nuts or popcorn) can cause choking.



3 HELP YOUR BABY LEARN TO FEED HIMSELF.

Helping your baby feed himself will teach him to eat the right amount of food for his small tummy, helping him grow into a healthy eater.

How to help your baby feed himself:

- Provide finger foods at meal and snack times that are soft and easy to chew.
- Help your baby drink water from a cup.
- Be patient and provide a positive, calm setting.
- Provide meals at the table, with your baby facing other family members, to role model healthy eating habits.
- Remember: A messy baby is a learning baby.

No juice needed

- One hundred percent fruit juice and sugar-sweetened drinks (such as fruit punch and soda) can cause tooth decay.
- Breastmilk, iron-fortified formula and small amounts of water are all your baby needs to drink.
- Your baby's cup or bottle should be a no fruit juice or sugar-sweetened drink zone.

Is cow's milk OK?

- Your baby's tummy and digestive tract are still not ready to handle cow's milk.
- Cow's milk does not provide the same nutrients as breastmilk or formula that are important for the growth of your baby's brain and body.

What to expect next:

- Over the next three months, your baby will continue to develop his eating and self-feeding skills.
- Help your baby continue to develop into a healthy eater by starting to reduce the amount of pureed foods you feed him and increasing the amount of soft-cooked, diced and chopped foods.
- **By 12 months, your baby should be eating table foods with the family.**