

Infant Feeding

Choosing to breast feed or formula feed is a personal decision based on many factors. This handout is meant to provide some helpful information. Although all our babies are "perfect," no baby takes their feeds "by the book." In general, most healthy newborns are ready to feed within 3 hours of delivery and feed every 2-5 hours on demand. If your baby is lazy about feeding or sleeps a lot, you may have to wake them up for feeds the first week or so. Most infants urinate 4-6 times a day. Formula fed babies stool about once a day. Breast fed infants stool several times a day or even after *every* feed in the beginning but as they mature the stool frequency decreases. Some breast-fed babies may even stool once a week after adjusting to feeding regularly (as opposed to the free lunches via umbilical cord).

Breast-feeding

Breast-feeding is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics exclusively for the first six months of your baby's life. Continuing mother's milk all the way to your baby's first birthday is considered ideal if that is possible. There are several reasons: 1) breast milk contains the optimal form and ratio of fat, carbohydrates, and proteins for better absorption and nutrition, 2) it contains immune properties that protect your baby from infections, 3) breast fed infants have lower rates of asthma, allergies, diabetes and other diseases, and 4) some studies demonstrate psychological and cognitive advantages compared to formula fed infants. Expressed breast milk that will be used within 48 hours may be kept in the refrigerator. Otherwise, it should be stored in dated containers in the freezer for future use. Frozen breast milk should be thawed in warm water not in a microwave.

Formula Feeding

Cow's milk and soy formulas are adequate substitutes for human breast milk. An iron-fortified formula should always be used to prevent anemia. The iron in formulas is the physiologic amount for normal growth and has not been shown to cause constipation. Low-iron formulas can harm your child if used beyond the first few months and are not recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Some babies will feed every 1 ½ hours during the day then sleep longer at night. More commonly a baby will start out taking 2-3 oz. every 3-4 hours.. This increases to 4 oz. at one month then 6-8 oz. by six months. Roughly, it's about 2.5 oz. per pound of body weight a day. Most water supplies are safe. Boiling of water before mixing formula is recommended if questionable well or pond water is used or in areas of

frequent flooding. Lactose deficiency and cow's milk allergies are very rare. The use of expensive specialty formulas (i.e. Alimentum, Nutramigen, Pregestimil) should only be started under the supervision and consultation of your doctor here at **Caring Family**. Changing formulas every few days will only confuse feeding problems and not allow your baby to adjust. With time and patience, most standard cow's milk formulas are well tolerated. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that whole milk not be started until a baby is a year old because it is nutritionally inadequate to support normal growth and development by itself. Dr. Giese allows whole milk at 9 months of age when your baby takes adequate varieties of other foods, as most baby foods are adequately fortified both with vitamins and iron. Feeding your baby goat's milk is also not adequate and could cause your baby harm.

Starting Solids

Most infants are mature enough to start solids in the form of cereals and pureed vegetables, fruits and meats at 4-6 months of age. Starting earlier *may* cause allergies later in life or be harmful due to aspiration or choking. Most infants demonstrate their willingness or lack of readiness by their body language: watch your baby's mouth as **you** eat! Foods should be introduced one at a time in one-week intervals. This allows your baby to adjust to the new food and be observed for possible food allergies or intolerances (diarrhea or constipation). The preferred order is: cereal, vegetables, fruits, meats.

The Extras

After 4-6 months of age breast milk as the **sole** source of nutrition is considered to be inadequate by scientist's measurements. Cereals or other foods fortified in **iron** are needed and some exposure to **sunlight** is needed (to stimulate the body's production of **Vitamin D**). Since you are likely to add cereal at that age anyway, and since you will be out and about showing off the latest fantastic creation of God's (your baby), that should not be a concern. If your home is on well water you also need to have that tested to see if there is inadequate fluoride (<0.3 ppm). The health department charges a nominal fee to test a water sample that you bring to the county building (across from traffic court!) All city water is fortified in fluoride, and if you use bottled water in your house, ask the company for fluoridated water. If all else fails, we can provide a prescription for vitamins with fluoride. Speaking of vitamins, there is no need for vitamins if a good variety of foods are provided after you are done with breast milk or formula. GNG 2-01

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