

Feeding Your Baby from about 9 Months



Offer a variety of soft textures such as finely minced, mashed, ground, lumpy foods and finger foods to your older baby. At first, meals may be a mix of puréed and soft foods. Increasing the texture of food helps your baby learn chewing and swallowing skills. Even without teeth, babies are able to chew their food. By one year of age, very few puréed foods should be offered. Food can be mashed with a fork and served on a spoon, cut into pieces the size of a green pea or cut into soft “strips”.

Menu Ideas

Vegetables and Fruit

- Pieces of any fresh or frozen cooked vegetable like carrots, sweet potato, squash, broccoli, cauliflower and green beans
- Frozen peas: cooked or still frozen
- Soft pieces of peeled and chopped fresh fruits like pears, peaches, banana, or canned fruit packed in juice or water, not syrup
- Chopped melon, grapes, oranges, berries etc., mashed avocado

There is no need to offer 100% fruit juice

Grain Products

- Look for whole grain products
- Continue offering infant cereal
- Bread crusts, toast, bagels, tortillas, pita bread, unsalted crackers
- Dry lower sugar cereal
- Rice, pasta, couscous, barley
- Perogies, dumplings
- Pancakes, French toast, muffins

Calcium Rich Protein Foods

- Between 9-12 months, babies will often breastfeed 3-4 times per day
- Gradually introduce whole (homo) milk between 9-12 months when baby is eating a variety of foods
- After 12 months, 16 oz. (500 ml) of milk is recommended daily. Do not offer more than 750 ml per day.

Whole milk (homo) should be used until 2 years of age

- Shredded or small cubes of cheese
- Cottage or ricotta cheese
- Plain, full fat yogurt with mashed fruit added
- Grilled cheese sandwich, cut into small cubes

Iron Rich Protein Foods

- Casseroles made with ground meat: mash with a fork or finely chop meat
- Meat loaf/balls - cut into pieces
- Baked beans, pea soup, lentil soup or bean casserole, casseroles with rice and tofu
- Whole cooked eggs
- Egg, tuna and salmon sandwiches
- Nut and seed butters added to hot cereal or spread thinly on toast

Sample Menu for 9-12+ months

This sample menu is a guide only. Every baby is different and may eat more or less than the amounts given. Follow your baby's cues to know how much to feed.

| Age | Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner | Snacks |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 9-12+ months | <p>Breastfeeding early morning and on cue</p> <p>2-4 T. (30-60 ml) fruit mashed or chopped</p> <p>4-8 T. (30-60 ml) iron fortified infant cereal *</p> <p>2-4 oz. (60-125 ml) milk in an open cup</p> | <p>2-4 T. (30-60 ml) vegetables mashed or chopped</p> <p>2-4 T. (30-60 ml) fruit mashed or chopped</p> <p>1 serving of grain products *</p> <p>2-4 T. (30-60 ml) meat or plant protein, mashed or chopped</p> <p>2-4 oz. (60-125 ml) milk in an open cup</p> | <p>2-4 T. (30-60 ml) vegetables mashed or chopped</p> <p>2-4 T. (30-60 ml) fruit mashed or chopped</p> <p>1 serving of grains products *</p> <p>2-4 T (30-60 ml). meat or plant protein mashed or chopped</p> <p>2-4 oz. (60-125 ml) milk in an open cup</p> | <p>Breastfeeding on cue</p> <p>Water in an open cup</p> <p>Whole grain toast cut into strips and 2-4 T. (30-60 ml) fruit (e.g., mashed avocado, stewed prunes or applesauce)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>2-4 T. (30-60 ml) plain, full fat yogurt or grated cheese with 2-4 T. (30-60 ml) mashed fruit</p> |
| <p>*Amounts shown are prepared food (cereal, pasta, rice etc.) Grain Products servings = ¼- ½ slice toast, 2-4 T (30-60 ml) prepared cereal, 2-4 T. (30-60 ml) cooked rice or pasta</p> | | | | |

Choking

Coughing and gagging are normal and part of learning how to eat. Always stay with your child and supervise feeding. Babies should be seated upright when eating. Don't allow them to walk around with food in their hands or mouths. Many foods are considered unsafe because they can block airways. Foods to avoid include, hard or gummy candies, marshmallows, whole nuts and seeds, popcorn, dried fruit or snacks on toothpicks or skewers. Foods that are hard or round need special preparation. Slice grapes, cherry tomatoes, hot dogs and sausages lengthwise. Grate or chop raw vegetables or hard fruit. Spread peanut butter thinly on toast or crackers. Chop stringy foods like celery and pineapple finely.

Family Meals

Include your baby in a high chair at the table during family meal time. Offer them small pieces of what the family is eating – a piece of broccoli, a few chopped and cooked carrots, a cut-up meatball or a noodle. Family mealtime teaches babies better eating habits by example and is a very good routine to develop at a young age.



References:

Health Canada (2012) *Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants: Recommendations from Birth to Six Months*

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/infant-nourisson/recom/index-eng.php>

Health Canada (2014) *Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants: Recommendations from Six to 24 Months.*

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/nutrition/infant-nourisson/recom/recom-6-24-months-6-24-mois-eng.php>

Revised by Registered Dietitians March 2023