

Food for Baby's First Year—General Guidelines for Feeding Healthy Infants Birth to 6 Months

Pediatricians recommend babies be breastfed until at least 1 year of age or older.

If you are thinking about giving infant formula (artificial baby milk) to your breastfed baby, talk with the nutritionist or health care provider. Babies who are not breastfed need iron-fortified infant formula until they are 1 year old.

Breastfed Babies

Birth to 2 months:

8 to 12 or more breastfeedings per day

2 to 4 months:

8 to 10 or more breastfeedings per day

4 to 6 months:

6 to 8 or more breastfeedings per day



In the United States, it is recommended that women with HIV or AIDS not breastfeed as the virus can be passed to their baby through breastmilk. If you do not know your HIV status, please ask your health care provider for an HIV test.

Most babies are ready to eat baby cereal when they can hold their heads steady, sit with some support, and take cereal off a spoon.

Formula Fed Babies

Birth to 1 month:

2 to 3 oz formula per feeding
8 to 12 feedings per day

1 to 4 months:

4 to 6 oz formula per feeding
6 to 8 feedings per day

4 to 6 months:

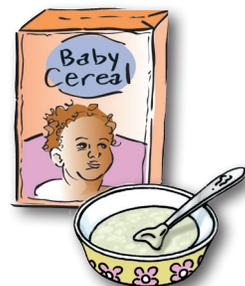
5 to 8 oz formula per feeding
5 to 6 feedings per day

When feeding with a bottle, always hold your baby: Do not put your baby to bed with a bottle or prop the bottle in your baby's mouth. Your baby could choke or could develop tooth decay.

Water Healthy babies under 6 months old do not usually need to be given water bottles. Check with your baby's health care provider for more information.

Baby Cereal

- Begin iron-fortified baby cereal between **4 and 6 months**. For babies who are only breastfed, wait until about 6 months.
- Start with a **single-grain baby cereal**. Mix dry cereal with breastmilk, infant formula, or water.
- Feed the single-grain baby cereal for at least 1 week before offering another single-grain baby cereal. Once you have tried all of the single-grain baby cereals, you can offer mixed-grain baby cereal. As your baby grows, feed a variety of iron-fortified baby cereals to your baby.
- Feed 1 to 8 tablespoons prepared cereal per day with a spoon, not in a bottle or infant feeder.



Fruit Juice is not recommended for babies under 12 months of age.

If you feed your baby with a bottle:

Make sure everything is clean: This means hands, kitchen, and equipment. Sterilize new bottles and nipples before their first use. If you have chlorinated water, clean bottles in the dishwasher or by hand with warm, soapy water. Otherwise, boil nipples and bottles in water for 5 to 10 minutes.

Formula preparation: Talk with your baby's health care provider about the most appropriate water for your baby that is available in your area and whether that water should be boiled and cooled before mixing with infant formula. Follow the mixing instructions on the label or as given by your baby's health care provider. For information about water fluoridation, see the Florida Department of Health, Dental Health website at: www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/dental-health/fluoridation/index.html.

To reduce the amount of lead in the water: Do not boil the water for longer than 2 minutes. Use only cold tap water and let the cold water run for 2 minutes before using it. Do not use hot tap water.

Warming baby's bottle: The best way to warm a bottle of formula is to place the bottle in a bowl of warm water for a few minutes, then shake the bottle. Use a prepared bottle of formula immediately. Throw away any formula left in the bottle after a feeding. Do not use a microwave oven to heat breastmilk or infant formula. The liquid heats unevenly, can get too hot, and can burn your baby's mouth.

Storing formula: Mixed formula that has never been heated may be stored in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours. Leftover, prepared formula that has been warmed should be thrown out and not re-refrigerated for future use. Store ready-to-feed and concentrated liquid formula covered in the original can in the refrigerator. Use within 48 hours of opening. Powdered formula, which is covered tightly with a lid, may be stored in a cool, dry place for up to 30 days.

