



Feeding Your Baby

2008

ML MIDDLESEX-LONDON
HEALTH UNIT
www.healthunit.com

"Feeding Your Baby" provides recommendations about feeding healthy babies from 6 to 12 months. If your baby was born prematurely or has health problems, consult your health care provider to see how these guidelines apply to your child.

The following information is based on guidelines from Health Canada, the Canadian Pediatric Society and Dietitians of Canada's Practice Based Evidence in Nutrition (PEN).

**Middlesex-London Health Unit
50 King Street, London, Ontario
Phone: (519) 683-5317
Health Connection: (519) 850-2280
After Hours Infant Line: (519) 675-8444**

May be reproduced in its entirety provided the Middlesex-London Health Unit is acknowledged.

2008

Table of Contents

Title

Page

0 to 6 months	2
---------------------	---

6 to 7 Months	10
---------------------	----

Starting Baby on Solid Foods at 6 Months	10
General Guidelines for Introducing Solids	11
First Foods	11
Importance of Iron	12
Infant Cereal	12
Meat and Alternatives	13
Introducing a Cup	13
Vegetables and Fruit	13
Fruit Juice	14
Vegetarian Diet for Baby	14
Store Bought Baby Foods	14
Making Your Own Baby Food	15
Warming Baby Food	19

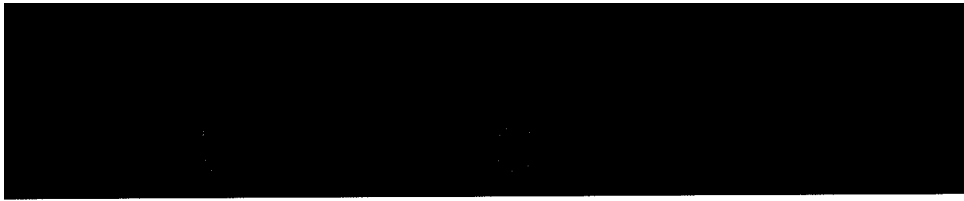
8 to 12 Months	20
----------------------	----

Meat and Alternatives	20
Fish and Shellfish	20
Milk Products	21
Switching from Bottle to Cup	22
Finger Foods and Family Meals	22

Sample Menu	24
-------------------	----

Common Concerns	26
-----------------------	----

Food Allergies	26
Choking	27
Early Childhood Tooth Decay	28
Fluoride	28
Your Baby's Bowel Routine	29
Diarrhea	30
More Information and Websites	31
Baby Food Basics DVD Order Form	32



Breast Milk is Best

Breast milk is the perfect food and breastfeeding is the ideal way to feed your baby. The longer you breastfeed, the better it is for you and your baby. Breast milk is easy to digest and meets your baby's nutritional needs. When you introduce solid foods at 6 months, breastfeeding is still important because it continues to be the main source of nutrition for your baby.



It is recommended that you continue to breastfeed your baby after solid foods are introduced. Breastfeeding can continue up to 2 years of age or longer, if you choose.

Benefits of Breastfeeding:

- protects mom and baby from illness and disease.
- promotes the unique bond between mom and baby.
- costs less than formula feeding.
- protects the environment from waste.



Vitamin D Supplements for Breastfed Babies

A daily vitamin D supplement is recommended for breastfed babies starting at birth. Vitamin D should be given until baby is weaned (stops breast feeding) or until baby's diet includes at least 16 oz or 500 ml of formula or whole milk. A liquid vitamin D supplement is available in pharmacies and grocery stores.

Refer to the Middlesex-London Health Unit Breastfeeding Handbook for more information about breastfeeding.



Formula Feeding

Infant formulas are made from cow's milk or soy protein. If you decide to formula feed your baby, use an **iron fortified, cow's milk** formula. Formula-fed babies do not need a vitamin D supplement. Continue to feed your baby iron fortified formula until your baby is at least 9-12 months of age.



Avoid changing your baby's formula. Switching formulas often causes stomach upset, gas or fussiness.

Soy Formula

Soy formulas don't offer any advantage over iron fortified cow's milk formulas. People often use soy formula because they think their baby isn't tolerating a cow's milk formula. Many babies who are allergic to cow's milk also become allergic to soy protein. Soy formulas are all iron fortified. They are appropriate for infants fed vegan diets and infants with galactosemia.

If soy products are chosen over cow's milk products, soy formula should be given to babies until 24 months of age. Soy beverages and soy milk may not contain enough fat and calories for children under the age of two.



Follow-Up Formula

Follow-up formulas are made for babies 6 months and older. They are not better for your baby but they may cost less than starter formulas. After your baby reaches six months of age, you can continue with a starter formula or switch to a follow-up formula. Even though babies should get iron from foods after six months, they also need a formula with iron until 9-12 months of age.

0 to 6 months

Formula with Omega-3 and 6 Fats

Omega-3 fats are important for a baby's brain and eye development. There may be some health benefits to using formula with added omega-3 and 6 fats but more research is needed to confirm this. Formula with added omega 3 and 6 fats cost more than standard formulas.

Organic Formula

Organic infant formula is similar to standard infant formula. The only difference between standard infant formula and organic infant formula is that organic formula is made from organic ingredients and may cost more.

Water for Babies

Babies get enough water from breast milk or formula for the first 6 months. At 6 months, offer your baby some water in a "sippy" cup with her meals. Offer up to 2-4 oz (60-125 ml) of water per day.



All water used to make formula should be sterilized until your baby is 4 months of age. The Middlesex-London Health Unit recommends that you continue to boil your well water as long as you use it to make formula.



Lead in Water

If you live in a house with lead service lines, use an approved (NSF) tap water filter or bottled lead-free water when preparing formula. You can get more information at www.healthunit.com or www.london.ca.

Sterilization and Formula Preparation

Water for Making Formula

Tap water and bottled water can be used to make infant formula. Both should be boiled until your baby is 4 months of age. Do not use distilled, carbonated or mineral water to make formula.

Well Water

Well water that has tested safe can be used to make formula. Sterilize your well water when you use it to make formula.

Sterilizing Water

Boil water in a pot and let it boil hard and bubble for 2 minutes to get rid of germs. Take the pot off the burner and let the water cool



for at least one hour. Store boiled water in a container that has been sterilized and cover it tightly. It can be stored in the fridge for 2-3 days or at room temperature for 24 hours.

Cleaning Equipment:

- Wash all equipment with a brush in hot, soapy water. Rinse well.
- Throw out any nipples that are swollen, cracked or sticky.

Sterilizing Equipment

Place clean bottles, nipples and can opener (and anything else that will touch the formula) in a large pot and let it boil hard and bubble for 2 minutes. Remove from pot and allow to air dry on a clean towel.

Electric kettles and dishwashers do not sterilize equipment. Water has to boil hard and bubble for 2 minutes to sterilize. It is best to use a pot on the stove to sterilize water and equipment.



Preparing Bottles:

- The sterilized bottles are now ready for expressed breast milk or ready-to-feed formula.



If using powdered or concentrated formula, **check preparation directions on the label.** Use sterilized and cooled water and follow directions exactly. Using too little or too much water can make your baby sick.

Storing Bottles:

- Immediately place prepared formula in the back of the refrigerator where it is coldest.
- Check the formula can to see how long prepared formula can be kept in the fridge.
- Formula should not be left at room temperature for longer than 2 hours.
- Once a baby drinks from a bottle, that bottle should not be stored for later use. The formula should be thrown out after one hour.
- Bacteria can grow in formula that is left out of the fridge and make your baby sick.

Following Your Baby's Hunger Cues

It is very important to feed your baby when you notice his early hunger cues.



It is better to feed on demand rather than feed at a set time.

Your baby may be hungry when:

- His eyes are open wider than usual.
- He curls his arms and legs up.
- You touch his mouth, cheek or chin, and he turns toward the touch and makes sucking motions.
- He tucks his hands under his chin or sucks on them.



Crying is a later hunger cue. If you wait until your baby cries when he is hungry, he may get too upset and not feed well.

Sleeping Through the Night

In the first few months, most babies wake up during the night for at least one feeding. Babies have small stomachs and can't hold much milk. They need to eat often to satisfy hunger and to provide energy to grow. It can take several months before your baby sleeps through the night.



0 to 6 months

Warming Formula and Breast Milk

The safest way to heat a bottle is to place it in a dish of hot water. The bottle should feel warm, not hot. Before feeding, tip the bottle upside down 10 times then test the formula on the back of your hand.

Breast milk shouldn't be microwaved because valuable nutrients are destroyed.



Microwaves can heat liquids unevenly, causing "hot spots" that could burn the baby. Do not microwave plastic containers, bags and nipples because the plastic could melt and leak into the formula. Because of the possible concerns with using plastic bottles that have been heated, glass bottles could be considered.

Guidelines for Amount of Formula or Expressed Breast Milk (EBM)

This is a guide **only** for the amount of expressed breast milk (EBM) or formula your baby needs. **Always respond to your baby's hunger cues and feed on demand.** Your baby is getting enough milk if he is content after feeds, growing well, has bowel movements regularly and has at least 6 wet diapers over 24 hours.



0-1 months	8-10	12 oz (360 ml)
1-2 months	6-10	24 oz (720 ml)
2-3 months	6-8	24 oz (720 ml)
3-4 months	5-7	24 oz (720 ml)
4-5 months	5-6	30 oz (900 ml)
5-6 months	5-7	30 oz (900 ml)
6-8 months	4-5	24 oz (720 ml)
9-11 months	3-4	24 oz (720 ml)

Adapted from: Manual of Clinical Dietetics 6th edition 2000, Pediatric Manual of Clinical Dietetics 1998.

Hydration

Babies need to feed often, day and night, because they have small stomachs and can become dehydrated quickly (body loses too much water). For the first 6 months, breast milk or iron fortified formula contain enough water to keep your baby hydrated.

Spitting Up

Spitting up a small amount is common. Some babies' digestive systems need more time to mature. Spitting up is not a concern as long as your baby is growing. Babies commonly spit up through their mouths and noses. Spitting up gradually decreases and usually stops by about one year of age.

These tips might help decrease your baby's spitting up:

- Feed smaller amounts more often. Make sure your baby is satisfied at the end of the feed.
- Keep your baby upright for at least 30 minutes after a feed.
- Try not to lie your baby down or put in an infant car seat right after feeding.
- Burp your baby more often throughout the feeding.
- If your baby spits up, don't feed again until your baby shows signs he is hungry again.
- Avoid tight diapers and waistbands.
- Avoid exposing your baby to cigarette smoke.

How to know when baby is full

Babies usually let us know when they have had enough to drink or eat. Stop feeding when your baby shows you one of these signs that she is full.

These signs show baby is full:

- Turning her head away.
- Playing instead of eating.
- Closing her mouth when she sees breast, bottle or spoon.

Baby's Growth

Weight gain is the best way to tell if your baby is growing well. Each baby has a different growth rate. Weight gain should be followed over a period of time using a growth chart. If you have concerns, talk to your health care provider.

Some babies are slow to gain weight. There is no need for concern if:

- growth is consistent
- baby is alert
- the right amount and type of milk and solid foods are being offered



**The average infant doubles their birth weight by 4-6 months.
They triple their birth weight by the age of 12 months.**



If you think your baby is too heavy, don't be too concerned. You can help your baby grow into a healthy weight by following her hunger cues carefully, encouraging active play and offering healthy foods.

Food and drinks should be offered when your baby shows signs of being hungry or thirsty. Stop feeding when your baby wants to stop. Overfeeding can lead to too much weight gain.



Never use food and drinks as a reward, punishment or as an activity to pass the time.

6 to 7 months

Starting Baby on Solid Foods

At 6 months of age, your baby will need more nutrients than breast milk and iron fortified formula alone can provide.

At 6 months, look for ALL of these signs that your baby is ready for solids:

- Baby can sit up, alone or with support.
- Baby can use the muscles in his neck to hold his head up straight.
- Baby can turn his head away if he doesn't want the food.
- Baby can close his lips over the spoon.



Giving solids before 6 months *will not* make your baby sleep through the night.



Giving solid food too early can cause digestive problems or allergic reactions.

If you give your baby solid foods **too early**, your baby may:

- Not get the right amount of protein, fat and important nutrients.
- Develop allergies.
- Breastfeed less often or stop breastfeeding too early.
- Not get all of the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding (such as less illness).

If you start your baby on solid foods **too late**, your baby may:

- Be slow to accept new foods and new textures.
- Have problems chewing solid food.
- Refuse to eat solid foods.
- Not get enough extra food to meet an older baby's increased energy and nutrient needs.



General Guidelines for Introducing Solids:

- Solid foods should not replace breast milk or formula. Breast milk and formula have more nutrients and calories than solid foods. Try to offer solid foods after breastfeeding or formula feeding until your baby is about 9 months of age.
- Introduce new foods one at a time, at least 3 days apart. If baby doesn't tolerate a food, it will be easier to know which food is causing the problem.
- Offer a small amount (1-3 teaspoons) of food at first.
- You will decide what will be offered and at what time of day. Your baby will let you know if she wants to eat or not, and how much she wants.
- Continue feeding your baby as long as she appears to want to eat. You will know the meal is finished when your baby stops eating or loses interest. This might be before the bowl is empty.
- Babies may refuse to eat for a number of reasons. It doesn't mean they don't like the food. Maybe they aren't feeling well or maybe they are tired. Sometimes they lose interest in a particular food.
- Don't force baby to eat a new food. If a food is refused, try again in a week or two.
- A baby doesn't need added butter, margarine, salt or sweetener (sugar, honey, molasses).

First Foods

Health Canada (2006) states that iron rich foods like meat and meat alternatives can safely be given as first foods at 6 months of age. Parents and caregivers can choose to start with either infant cereal or meat and alternatives. By 8 months of age, foods from the Vegetables and Fruit group, the Grain Products group and the Meat and Alternatives group should be part of an infant's daily diet.



For more information about Canada's Food Guide go to www.healthcanada.ca.

Health Canada (2006) states that iron rich foods can be introduced at 6 months of age. These include meat, fish, poultry, cooked egg yolks, legumes and tofu.





The importance of iron

In the first year of life, babies are growing so fast that they need more iron **than an adult**.

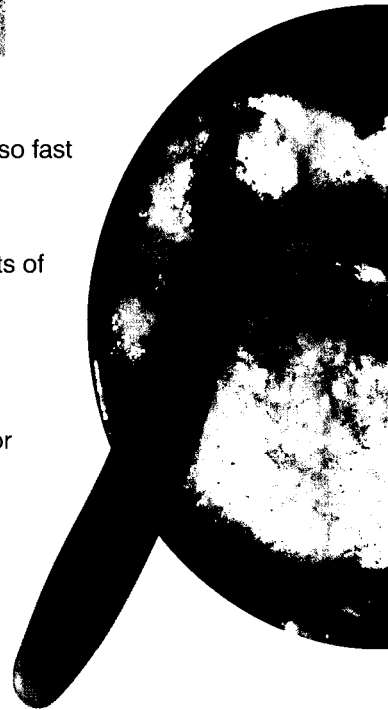
Iron:

- Carries oxygen from the lungs to all parts of the body
- Helps build red blood cells
- Helps brain development

A child with iron deficiency will have a poor appetite, poor weight gain, low energy, fussiness and learning difficulties.

Babies get iron from:

- Breast milk
- Iron fortified formula
- Meat, poultry, fish, infant cereal, eggs, tofu and legumes



Iron Fortified Infant Cereals (6 months)

Single grain infant cereals are a good choice as the first solid food to offer your baby. These cereals have a number of nutrients like extra iron that your baby needs. Rice cereal is often introduced first as it is easily digested and isn't likely to cause an allergic reaction.

At first, start by mixing the cereal with breast milk, formula or water so that it is runny like cream soup. Add less liquid as your baby learns to manage a thicker mixture. Spoon-feeding is an important part of learning and growing.



Don't add cereal to your baby's bottle. This can cause your baby to choke.



After at least 3 days of the same cereal, you can introduce another single-grain cereal (barley, oatmeal, or soy). Offer the mixed-grain cereals last. Once all cereals have been introduced, continue to use a variety of cereals, including the single grain cereals, and alternate them for variety.

Continue to use infant cereals until your baby is at least **18 months**.

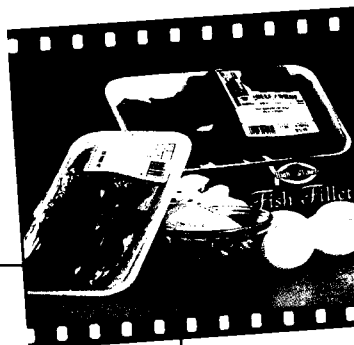
Meat and Alternatives (6 months)

You can give these as first foods:

- Plain puréed meat or poultry such as chicken, turkey, veal, lamb, pork, beef and fish.
- Hard-cooked egg yolks (no egg whites).
- Puréed tofu and legumes such as kidney beans, chickpeas or lentils.

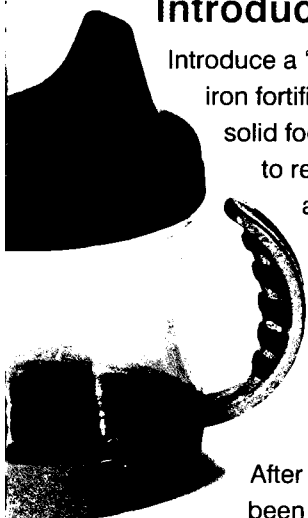


Don't give egg white to your baby until he is 12 months old because of the risk of allergies.



Introducing a Cup (6 months)

Introduce a "sippy" cup of water, expressed breast milk or iron fortified formula to your baby when you introduce solid foods at 6 months. At this age, cups aren't meant to replace breastfeeding or bottle-feeding but add a little fluid at mealtime and allow your baby to practice drinking from a cup. It is recommended that bottles be stopped and replaced with cups by about 12 months of age.



Vegetables and Fruit

(6-7 months)

After infant cereal and/or meats and alternatives have been introduced, you can start your baby on puréed vegetables and fruits. Vegetables are often introduced before fruit so your baby will not expect all foods to taste sweet. Choose vegetables such as carrots, squash, peas, sweet potatoes, and green and yellow beans. Unsweetened fruits such as apples, pears, peaches, apricots, plums or bananas are good first choices. Avoid jars of fruit with added sugar that are labeled as a "fruit dessert". After you have introduced fruit to your baby, add it to infant cereal to keep your baby interested in it.

Infant cereal, meats and alternatives, vegetables and fruits will give your baby a healthy start.



Fruit Juice

It is not necessary to offer juice to your baby. Juice shouldn't replace breast milk or formula. Breast milk, formula, vegetables and fruit contain all the nutrients that juice provides and many more. If you decide to give your baby juice, wait until **after 6 months of age** and offer it in a "sippy" cup rather than a bottle. Add 2 oz (60 ml) of water to 2 oz of juice. Four ounces of the juice/water mix is the most the baby should have each day. Offer it at meal or snack time only.

Vegetarian Diet for Baby

A vegetarian diet for a baby should include breastmilk, cow's milk formula or soy formula. It should also include a variety of milk or soy products and meat alternatives, such as tofu and legumes.



A well-planned vegetarian diet (foods from all 4 food groups) can meet the nutritional needs of a growing baby. If your baby does not eat foods from all food groups, his diet may be lacking in nutrients.



For more information, refer to our Feeding Your Vegetarian Baby fact sheet at www.healthunit.com or call (519) 850-2280.

Choosing Store Bought Baby Foods

Choose plain vegetables, fruits and meats. Keep these points in mind when buying and serving store bought baby foods:

- ✓ Read the labels to avoid ingredients like sugar.
- ✓ Serve foods plain rather than mixing (e.g. mixing infant cereal with meat). This will help your baby to learn about and accept different flavours and textures.
- ✓ Check the best before date.
- ✓ Make sure the safety seal on the jar of baby food hasn't been broken. When you open a jar of baby food, listen for a popping sound. If it doesn't make this sound, do not serve the food to your baby. Germs or bacteria may be in the food.



- ✓ Don't feed directly from the jar unless all the food will be used.
Any food that is mixed with baby's saliva should be thrown out after the meal because bacteria can grow in it.
- ✓ Opened jars of commercial baby food can be kept covered in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Any food that is left in the bowl after the meal should be thrown out.



Making Your Own Baby Food

Homemade baby food can be a healthy choice.

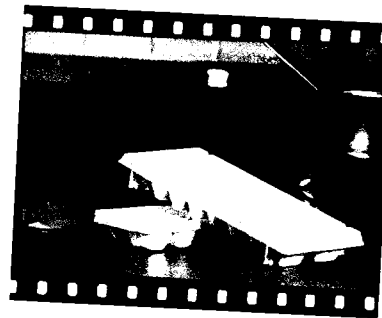
Choose nutritious ingredients, cook and store foods properly and be extra careful about cleanliness.

Good reasons to make your own baby food:

- Allows you to make the food thicker as baby gets older. If you gradually offer your baby foods with more texture, it will help make the change to table food easier.
- Allows you to offer a wider variety of foods to your baby that is not available in a jar.
- Saves you money.

Equipment you will need:

- Blender, food processor, food grinder or sieve
- Pot and steamer or microwave safe dish
- Cutting board • Sharp knife
- Potato masher • Spoons
- Meat thermometer • Plastic wrap
- Labels and marker • Fork
- Freezer bags
- Ice cube trays or cookie sheet



To blend baby food, you can use a blender, food processor, food grinder, potato masher, fork or sieve. Your baby will only need finely mashed or blended foods for a short period of time. Make foods lumpier as your baby learns to eat foods with more texture. You can use a fork or potato masher as your baby gets older.

See **page 32** for our **Baby Food Basics DVD order form.**



Before you begin:

1. Wash your hands with hot soapy water.
2. Clean all equipment and counters with hot soapy water and dry with clean towel or air dry. Equipment can also be washed in a dishwasher.
3. Wash equipment and counters again before a different food is prepared.

Preparing Vegetables and Fruit:

Vegetables

Use fresh vegetables that are in season whenever possible. Frozen vegetables are also a good choice.

- ✓ Wash vegetables well, peel and cut fresh vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes, asparagus, green and yellow beans and squash.
- ✓ Frozen vegetables such as peas, squash and turnip are also good choices and little preparation.
- ✓ Canned vegetables that contain salt are not a good choice.

Fruits

Use fresh fruit when it is available. Otherwise use unsweetened frozen fruit or fruit canned in juice.

- ✓ Wash fresh fruit well and peel it. Cut fresh fruit such as apples, pears, peaches, nectarines, bananas, avocado and melon into small pieces. Be sure to remove all seeds.
- ✓ Prunes can be placed in hot water to soften.



Frozen fruits like blueberries and melon and canned fruits like unsweetened pears, peaches and pineapple are good choices.



Cooking Instructions

Boil or steam vegetables and fruit on the stovetop or cook in the microwave in a small amount of water until tender. If using the microwave, be sure to use a microwave safe dish. Keep the cooking water to add for blending later.

Fruits like apples, pears, peaches and nectarines should be peeled and steamed or boiled before blending. This will keep them from turning brown.

Canned fruit, bananas, soft ripe fruit and avocado don't need to be cooked before blending.

Blending

Purée or mash vegetables with some of the cooking water until smooth. The amount of liquid you need to use depends on the texture you want. Because fruits tend to have a high water content you may not need to add liquid when blending.

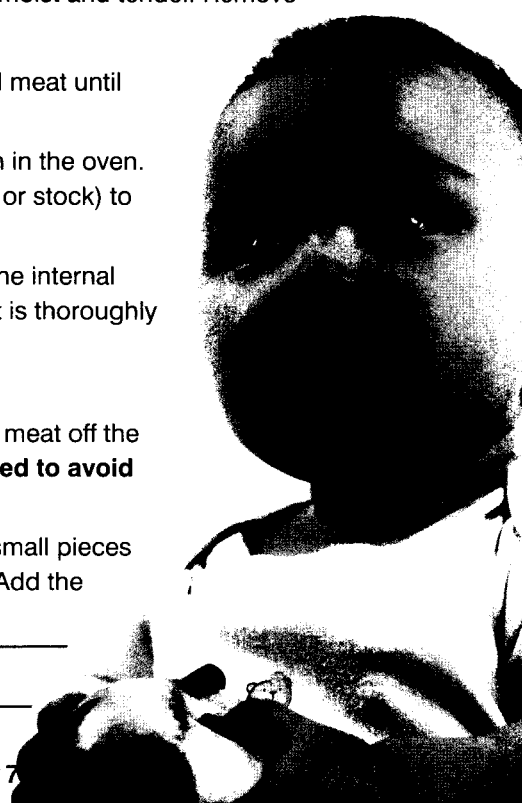
Meat and Alternatives

Choose chicken and turkey with the skin and higher fat cuts of beef, pork, lamb or veal. They will be more moist and tender. Remove bones from fish carefully.

1. Simmer chicken, turkey and ground meat until thoroughly cooked.
2. Cook beef, pork, veal, lamb and fish in the oven. Use a small amount of liquid (water or stock) to keep the meat moist.
3. Use a meat thermometer to check the internal temperature of the meat to ensure it is thoroughly cooked (refer to table on page 18).
4. Save the cooking liquid.
5. Remove skin, cut away fat and take meat off the bone. **Ensure all bones are removed to avoid choking.**
6. Chop the meat, poultry or fish into small pieces using a food processor or blender. Add the cooking liquid to moisten.



Avoid using salt and sauces.



6 to 7 months

Internal Cooking Temperatures

	Degrees °C	Degrees °F
Beef, veal, lamb		165
Beef ground		160
Fish		158
Pork		160
Poultry ground		165
Poultry whole		180
Poultry breast, thighs, and legs		165
Pre-cooked ham		140
Raw ham		160

Legumes (Dried peas, beans and lentils)

1. If using dried legumes, follow package directions for cooking.
2. If using canned legumes, place in a strainer and rinse well under cool running water. This removes some of the added salt.
3. Using a food processor, blender, sieve, potato masher or a fork, mash the legumes with a bit of water.



Tofu

1. Choose plain soft tofu.
2. Add a bit of water and mash with a fork until smooth.

Storage

Refrigerator

Put prepared food in a storage container, cover and place at the back of refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Freezer

1. Put blended baby food in ice cube trays or "drop" spoonfuls onto a wax paper lined cookie sheet.
2. Cover the tray or cookie sheet with plastic wrap and cool in refrigerator for 1-2 hours.
3. Put in freezer for about 24 hours.
4. Transfer the frozen food to a plastic freezer bag labeled with the name of the food and the date it was prepared. Remove as much air from the bag as possible. Return to freezer.

6 to 7 months

5. Freeze: Meats, poultry, fish up to 1 month
 Legumes, beans, lentils, tofu up to 3 months
 Vegetables and fruit up to 6 months



Never refreeze thawed baby food.

Food left in the baby's bowl should be thrown away after the feeding.



Warming Baby Food

Thaw

Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator overnight or in a microwave on the defrost setting (in a microwave safe dish).

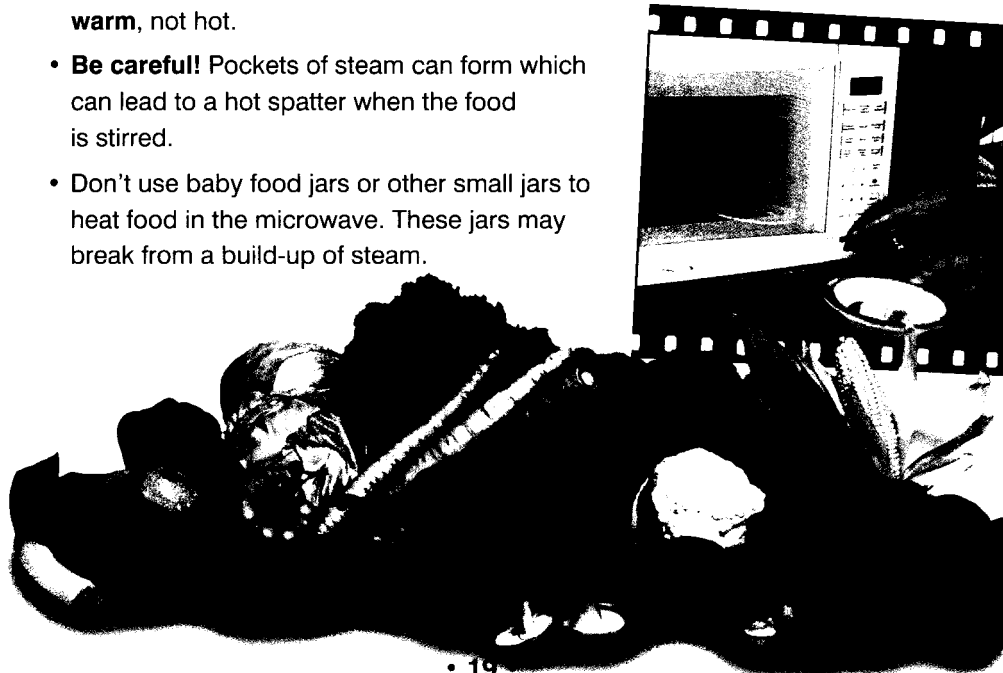
Reheat

Food can be reheated in a double boiler, egg poacher or a dish of hot water. Stir the food to distribute heat evenly. Test the temperature on the back of your hand before serving it to your baby.

Microwaves

Home prepared or commercially prepared baby foods can be heated in the microwave. Be careful and follow these guidelines:

- Transfer the food to a microwave safe dish. Microwave on low heat for about 30 seconds or less. **DO NOT OVERHEAT!** Stir well and test on the back of your hand to ensure the food is **warm**, not hot.
- **Be careful!** Pockets of steam can form which can lead to a hot spatter when the food is stirred.
- Don't use baby food jars or other small jars to heat food in the microwave. These jars may break from a build-up of steam.



8 to 12 months

More Foods for Baby

By 8 months of age, foods from the Vegetables and Fruit group, the Grain Products group and the Meat and Alternatives group should be part of an infant's daily diet. For more information about Canada's Food Guide go to www.healthcanada.ca.

Meats and Alternatives (8-12 months)

- From about 8 months of age, offer minced (thick purée) or chopped meats and alternatives
- It is better to offer meats and vegetables separately. If you use jars labeled "stews or casseroles" serve them as a vegetable because they do not contain much meat and are low in protein and iron.
- Limit meats such as bologna, ham, wieners and sausage because they are low in protein and iron and high in salt. Wieners and sausages can cause choking if not cut lengthwise and across before serving.
- Peanut butter is an alternative to meat and can be introduced to your older baby as a family food at about 12 months but allergies and choking should be considered. (see allergy information on page 26 and choking information on page 27)

Fish (6-12 months) and Shellfish (12 months)



Omega-3 fats are very important for the development of your baby's brain and eyes.

Fish can be introduced between the ages of 6-12 months and shellfish can be introduced at about 12 months. Fish and shellfish are a source of protein, vitamin D and healthy omega-3 fat. Offer your baby fish two times per week. Light chunk or flaked canned tuna and canned, fresh or frozen salmon are good choices. Some types of fish contain a lot of mercury, which can be harmful to babies. Albacore tuna is higher in mercury and should be limited to ¼ can per week (40 grams). Fresh/frozen tuna, shark, swordfish, marlin, orange roughy and escolar should be limited to no more than

40 grams per month. **All other sources of fish and shellfish are safe to offer your baby.**

While fish and seafood do cause allergies in some babies, they are still very healthy choices for most babies. If there is a family history of allergies, discuss introducing fish and shellfish to your baby with your health care provider. (see allergy information on page 26.)



For more information about fish, please visit www.healthcanada.ca or call the Health Connection at (519) 850-2280.

Milk Products (9-12 months)

Offer cottage cheese, grated cheese and plain yogurt (add your own fruit) to your baby. Avoid yogurt sweetened with honey. Choose full fat milk products. Cheese spreads (cream cheese, processed cheese spread) are not considered milk products because they are lower in protein and calcium. After you have introduced yogurt to your baby, add it to infant cereal to keep your baby interested in it.



Don't feed honey to infants under the age of 12 months due to the risk of botulism (a serious illness caused by bacteria in honey).

Milk and Your Baby

Cow's milk is NOT recommended before 9-12 months of age. It doesn't have all the nutrients that young infants need for healthy growth, is too difficult to digest and can cause damage to the stomach. As a result of stomach bleeding, it can cause anemia (low iron in baby's blood). Iron-deficiency anemia in babies can cause problems with growth, development, behaviour and learning.

You can introduce homogenized (homo) or whole cow's milk between 9-12 months of age when your baby is eating a wide variety of foods including infant cereal, vegetables, fruit, meat and alternatives. Continue giving baby whole milk until 24 months of age. Whole milk provides an important source of calories and fat in a toddler's diet.



Don't give cow's milk to your baby before he is 9-12 months old. Cow's milk can make a younger baby sick.

These Milks are NOT Recommended:

Low fat milks

Don't use 2%, 1% or skim milk before 2 years of age. Babies need the higher fat in homo milk for proper growth and brain development. After 2 years of age 1% or 2% is preferable over skim milk.

Unpasteurized milk (cow or goat)



Never feed unpasteurized milk to your baby. Unpasteurized milk contains bacteria that can seriously harm a baby.

Goat's Milk

Goat's milk shouldn't be used instead of breastfeeding or cow's milk formula. Goat's milk is more difficult to digest and doesn't have all the nutrients that baby needs. If whole goat's milk is introduced after 9-12 months, ensure that it is fortified with folic acid and vitamin D.

Soy/rice beverages

These beverages are not good choices for children under 24 months of age because they are missing important nutrients, especially fat. Homo milk or soy (formula) should be used until 24 months of age.

Switching from Bottle to Cup

It is a good idea to stop bottles by about 12 months of age. Starting at 12 months, your baby only needs 16 oz (500 ml) of homo milk per day. Gradually decrease the amount of formula or whole milk and the number of bottles offered between 9-12 months. Replace milk in a bottle with milk in a cup at meal time or snack time. Cups can help reduce the amount of milk older babies will take. Drinking less milk will allow your baby to have an increased appetite for solid food.

Family Meals

Eat meals with your baby and make mealtimes enjoyable. Your baby will learn from watching you. Babies also need to explore their food and learn how to feed themselves. "Practice makes perfect" but it also makes a mess, so be prepared!

Finger and "Family" Foods

Between 8-10 months of age, it is time to progress from puréed to mashed foods and then chopped family foods and finger foods.

At first, meals will be a combination of baby and family foods (what the rest of the family is eating). As your baby's ability to chew and swallow improves, offer different family foods, while gradually decreasing puréed foods. Increasing the texture of food helps your baby to develop chewing skills. Babies can chew even without teeth. By one year of age, very few puréed foods should be offered.

Foods for an older baby:

Family foods can be mashed with a fork and served on a spoon or cut into pieces the size of a green pea and offered as a finger food. Finger foods are foods that babies pick up themselves and put it in their mouths. Most babies will not learn to use a fork or spoon well until after 1 year of age.

Here are some foods you might want to try:

Milk Products

- Yogurt (full fat, plain)
- Grated cheese
- Cottage or ricotta cheese

Meat & Alternatives

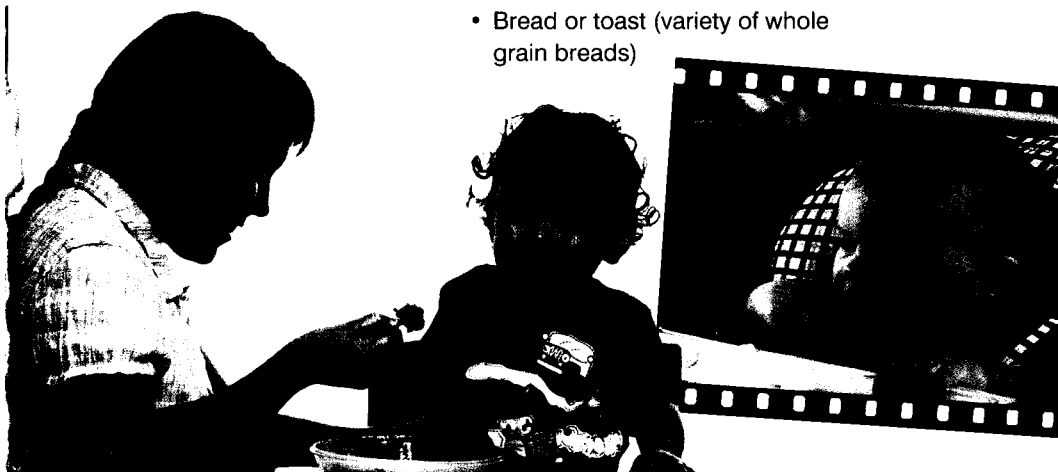
- Tofu
- Split pea or lentil soup
- Meat loaf, meat balls
- Cooked egg yolks
- Chili, baked beans
- Tuna or salmon sandwiches
- Casseroles
- Stews

Vegetables & Fruit

- Soft cooked, cut-up vegetables
- Soft cut-up fruits
(fresh or canned in juice)

Grain Products

- Pasta (cut up)
- Rice and barley
- Infant cereal with added fruit or yogurt
- Whole grain bagels (no seeds)
- Pancakes, French toast or muffins (no egg whites)
- Crackers & breadsticks
- Bread or toast (variety of whole grain breads)



Sample Menu

Solid Foods for Your Baby

This sample menu is a guide only. Every baby is different and may eat slightly more or less than the amounts listed. Follow your baby's cues to know how much to feed. Health Canada (2006) states that iron rich foods like meat, and meat alternatives can safely be given as first foods at 6 months of age. However, this menu reflects a typical pattern of eating in Canada.

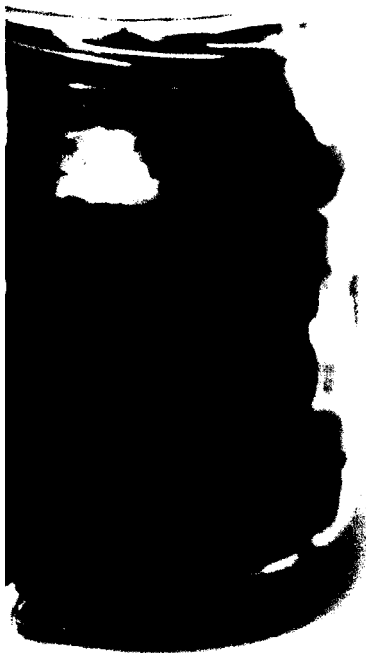
T=tablespoon (15 mL) t=teaspoon (5 mL) *Amounts shown are prepared food (cereal, pasta, rice etc.).

Grain Products servings = ¼ slice toast, 2-4 T. dry (ready-to-eat) cereal, 2 crackers, 2 T. cooked rice or pasta.

	Add iron fortified infant cereal (single grains: rice, barley and oats)	Begin with small amount cereal (1-3 t.) and progress to twice daily		Add cereal at lunch or dinner before introducing vegetables
		2-4 T. infant cereal	1-2 T. vegetable	2-4 T. infant cereal
	Add vegetables: (squash, peas, sweet potato etc.) Add fruits (apple, bananas, peaches, pears etc.) May add fruits to infant cereals	4-5 T. infant cereal	2-4 T. vegetable	4-5 T. infant cereal
		1-2 T. fruit	1-2 T. fruit	2-4 T. vegetables
	Add Grain Products: Add bread crumbs, dry toast, dry cereal and unsalted crackers. Add grains like rice and pasta.	4-8 T. infant cereal 2-4 T. fruit mashed or chopped	1-2 servings of grains products* 2-4 T. vegetable mashed or chopped 2-4 T. fruit mashed or chopped	1-2 servings of grains products* 2-4 T. vegetable mashed or chopped 2-4 T. fruit mashed or chopped
	Add Meats and Alternatives (cooked poultry, beef, pork, fish etc.) Add Alternatives (cooked egg yolk, tofu, & puréed or mashed legumes-beans, split peas & lentils)		1-3 T. meat or alternative minced or chopped	1-3 T. meat or alternative minced or chopped

2-4 T. milk product	1-2 serving grain product	1-2 serving grain product
	2-4 T. vegetable	2-4 T. vegetable
	2-4 T. fruit	2-4 T. fruit
	2-4 T. meat or alternative	2-4 T. meat or alternative
	2-4 oz milk	2-4 oz milk
4-8 T. infant cereal		
2-4 T. vegetable		
	2-4 T. fruit	
	2-4 oz milk	

2-4 T. milk product, formula or whole milk in a cup at most meals.



Common Concerns

Food Allergies

Research and information about preventing and managing allergies is changing very quickly and health care professionals have different recommendations. A consensus among Canadian health care providers does not exist at this time.

Up to 8% of babies develop food allergies. Food allergies are more common in babies when the baby's parent or sibling has allergies. An allergy is an abnormal reaction of the immune system to a protein in food.

Tips to protect your baby against food allergies are:

- For the first 6 months, give your baby breast milk only.
- Don't feed solids to your baby until 6 months.
- Introduce single grain infant cereal as first food.
Rice is recommended.
- Offer only small amounts of food at first.
- Offer a new food for at least 3 days before introducing another new food.



Wait until your baby is 12 months old before giving egg whites.

More About Food Allergies

- ✓ The foods that are most likely to cause allergies in babies and children are peanuts/peanut butter, tree nuts (all other nuts), cow's milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish, shellfish and sesame seeds.
- ✓ Many babies outgrow their food allergies but allergies to peanuts and shellfish are often lifelong.
- ✓ If the baby's parents or siblings do not have any allergies, eczema or asthma, the baby is at lower risk of getting an allergy. For these babies, there is no consistent scientific evidence to support delaying the introduction of peanut butter or shellfish until 2 or 3 years of age.

Common Concerns

- ✓ Peanut butter and shellfish are alternatives to meat and can be introduced to your older baby as a family food at about 12 months. **(see choking information that follows)**
- ✓ If one or both of baby's parents or siblings have allergies, asthma or eczema, you baby is more likely to develop a food allergy. Talk to your doctor about introducing allergenic foods like peanut butter. You may be advised to give these foods to your baby when they are older (2 or 3 years old).

If parents or siblings have allergies, asthma, or eczema, physicians may recommend that allergenic foods like peanut butter and shellfish not be introduced until the baby is 2 to 3 years old.



Choking

Your baby is learning to eat solid foods. There will be times when some food goes down the wrong way and comes right back up again. Gagging and coughing are a normal part of learning to eat. Babies can choke if food or small objects stick in their throats and block their airways.



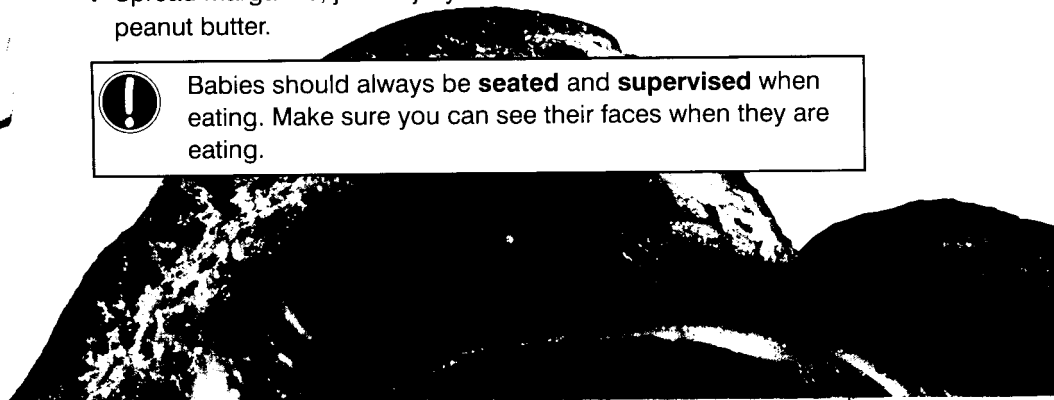
Foods that are hard, small and round, (whole grapes, olives) smooth and sticky, (soft bread, peanut butter) hard to chew, (nuts, raw vegetables) or don't melt quickly (crackers, cookies) can choke a baby.

Peanut Butter and Choking

- ✓ Sticky and dry foods like peanut butter can choke a baby or toddler.
- ✓ Peanut butter served alone or on a spoon is not safe for children under 4 years.
- ✓ Spread peanut butter thinly on crackers or toast.
- ✓ Spread margarine, jam or jelly on the crackers or toast with the peanut butter.



Babies should always be **seated** and **supervised** when eating. Make sure you can see their faces when they are eating.



To learn about preventing and dealing with choking:
The Canadian Red Cross offers Emergency and Standard Child
Care courses. **Call (519) 681-7330.**
St. John's Ambulance offers a Baby Safe course.
Call (519) 432-1352.

Early Childhood Tooth Decay (Also called baby bottle tooth decay)

A healthy infant has a healthy mouth. Early Childhood Tooth Decay (cavities) is the most common childhood disease. Cavities can start as early as 9 months of age, usually in the upper front teeth. This can easily be prevented.

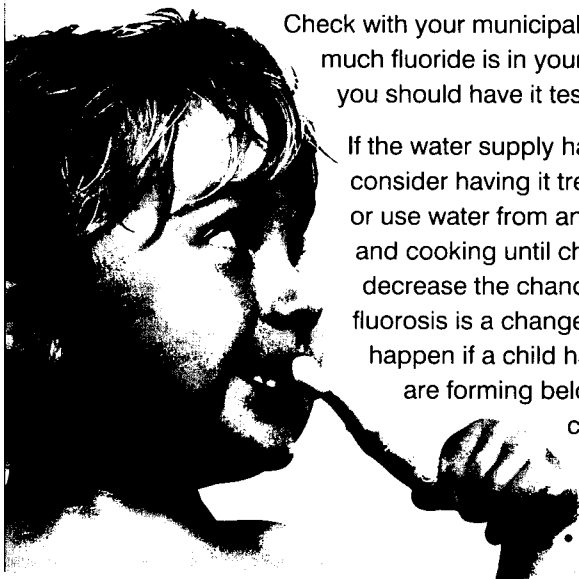
Tooth Decay (cavities) usually results from unhealthy feeding habits. Parents use food or drinks to quiet or calm a child. All liquids, except water, but including milk, formula, and unsweetened juices contain some sugar. The sugar combines with bacteria in the mouth to make acid. This acid can break down teeth and result in cavities

- **Do not** use a bottle/sippy cup to calm your child.
- **Do not** put your child to bed with a bottle or sippy cup.
- **Do not** allow your child to walk around with a bottle or sippy cup containing anything but water.
- **Do not** dip soothers in sugar, honey or syrup.

Fluoride

Check with your municipality or health unit to find out how much fluoride is in your water. If you have a private well, you should have it tested to determine the fluoride level.

If the water supply has over 1.5 mg/L of fluoride, consider having it treated to reduce the level of fluoride or use water from another source. Do this for drinking and cooking until children are 7 years old. This will decrease the chance of dental fluorosis. Dental fluorosis is a change in the look of the teeth that may happen if a child has too much fluoride when the teeth are forming below the gum line - not after they come into the mouth. It may look like white spots, brown stains or small pits.



Common Concerns

If the water has low levels of fluoride, the Health Unit doesn't generally recommend fluoride supplements. Your dentist or physician may recommend them for your child.

Clean your child's teeth as soon as the teeth appear. Choose non-fluoride toothpaste or don't use any toothpaste until your child is 2 years old. After 2 years, use a smear of fluoride toothpaste only twice per day until age 7. If the drinking water has over 1.5 mg/L of fluoride, use non-fluoride toothpaste until age 7.

Your Baby's Bowel Routine

Just because your baby hasn't had a bowel movement for a day or two doesn't mean that your baby is constipated. Bowel habits are different for every baby. Some babies have bowel movements after every feeding; some have those days apart. Both extremes are perfectly normal and may just be your baby's pattern.

If your baby has painful bowel movements that are hard, dry and difficult to pass, he may be constipated. Some babies have discomfort passing stools but produce a normal stool therefore they **don't have true constipation.**

True constipation is rare. If you are concerned about your baby's bowel habits, talk to your health care provider.



Tips for Healthy Bowel Movements

Ages 0-6 months

At this age, some infants may have difficulty with bowel movements if they don't get enough fluids. Make sure your baby is gaining weight and soaking at least 6 diapers over 24 hours. Iron fortified formula does not cause constipation in infants.

What you can do:

If breastfeeding:

- Offer the breast more often.

If bottle feeding:

- Offer bottles more frequently and/or increase the amount in the bottle.
- Add 1 tsp. (5 ml) corn syrup to one bottle of expressed breast milk or formula per 24 hours.
- Offer sips of boiled cooled water, about 2-4 oz per day. (Sterilization of water can be stopped at 4 months except for well water).



Do not use honey instead of corn syrup. Do not feed honey to infants under the age of 12 months due to the risk of botulism (a serious illness caused by bacteria in honey).

Ages 6-12 months

Babies at this age may have difficulty if they don't get enough fluid or fibre or are holding in their stools.

What can you do:

- Offer more breast milk or formula.
- Offer 1-2 oz of water, 1-3 times per day.
- Offer more whole grains, vegetables and fruit such as puréed prunes.
- Offer brown rice, barley and oatmeal infant cereal.
- Give undiluted fruit juice such as prune, pear or apple juice, up to 4 oz per day.



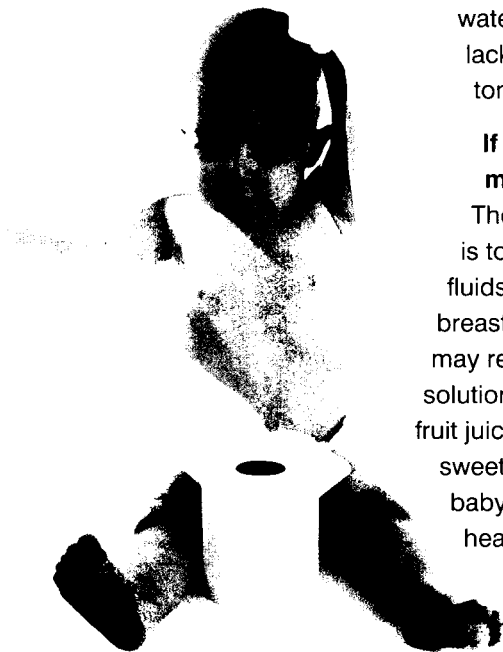
If constipation continues or you notice blood in the stools, call your doctor. **Never** use laxatives or enemas for baby without talking to your doctor.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea can be serious. It can result in dehydration (when body loses too much water). Early signs of dehydration can include lack of tears when crying, dry mouth and tongue, and fewer wet diapers.

If you think your baby has diarrhea or may be dehydrated, call your doctor.

The most important treatment for diarrhea is to make sure your baby drinks enough fluids to prevent dehydration. You can offer breast milk or formula as tolerated. Your doctor may recommend a commercial oral rehydration solution (like Pedialyte). Home remedies like fruit juice, fruit drinks, Kool-Aid®, sport drinks or sweetened tea are **not recommended**. As your baby begins to feel better, offer a variety of healthy foods.



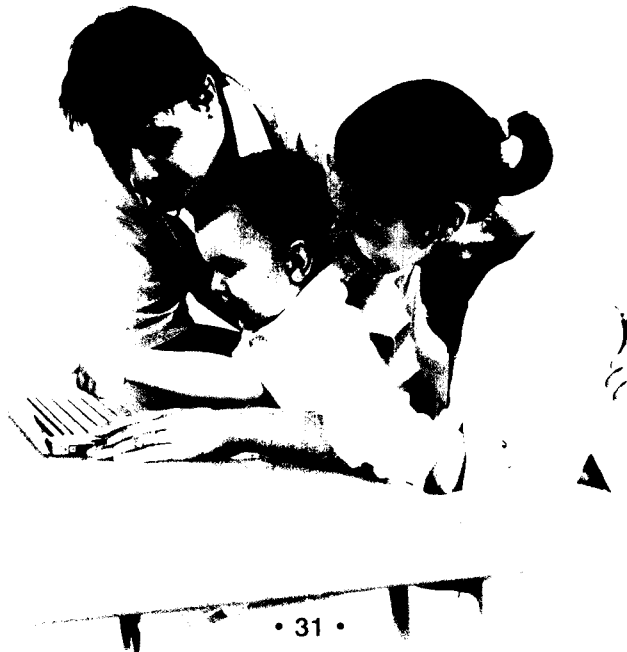
More Information on Feeding Your Baby

Websites:

- Middlesex-London Health Unit www.healthunit.com for more in-depth information
- Canadian Pediatric Society www.cps.ca
- Dietitians of Canada www.dietitians.ca
- Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants, 2005.

Check your local library or bookstore for the following books:

- Kalnins, Daina and Saab, Joanne. The Hospital for Sick Children Better Baby Food. Robert Rose Inc., 2001.
- Melina, Vesanto and Davis, Brenda. Becoming Vegetarian, 2003.
- Satter, Ellyn. Child of Mine. Feeding with Love and Good Sense. Bull Publishing Co., 2000.
- Satter, Ellyn. How to Get Your Kid to Eat ... But Not Too Much, 1987.
- Satter, Ellyn. Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family. Kelay Press, 1999.



Baby Food Basics DVD Order Form (DVD updated November 2007)

The DVD is a step-by-step visual guide of how to make your own baby food. It includes information about:

- introducing solid foods to a baby
 - selecting, cooking and processing healthy foods
 - interacting with your baby during feeding
-and much more.

To order a copy of the Baby Food Basics DVD, mail the completed form, include a cheque for \$5.00 **payable to the Middlesex-London Health Unit**. Please allow 4 weeks for delivery of the DVD.

Please send your completed order form and cheque to:

Baby Food Basics DVD
Middlesex-London Health Unit
50 King Street
London, Ontario
N6A 5L7



Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Number of Copies Requested: _____ # DVD's X \$5.00 each

Amount Enclosed (cheque):\$ _____

For more copies of this order form see

www.healthunit.com

The DVD was updated November 2007



Developed by:

Public Health Dietitians, Middlesex-London Health Unit.

Reviewed by:

Public Health Nurses, Middlesex-London Health Unit.

Family Home Visitors, Middlesex-London Health Unit.

Distributed by:

Middlesex-London Health Unit

50 King Street, London, Ontario N6A 5L7

Phone: (519) 663-5317

Health Connection: (519) 850-2280

Strathroy Office: Kenwick Mall

51 Front Street East, Strathroy, Ontario N7G 1Y5

Phone: (519) 245-3230

www.healthunit.com

2008