Feed Me!



6–12 MONTHS

What foods do I want?

Smooth, Mashed, Lumpy, Chopped, and Finger Foods

I'm now about 6 months old. I can sit up and hold my head steady. I am ready to try some solid foods.

- I am learning how to chew and swallow.
- Start me off slowly with small amounts of pureed (smooth) or mashed foods.





Keep feeding me breastmilk or formula. It is my main source of nutrition.

- Let me explore the foods' tastes and textures.
- Watch me so I do not choke.

I will quickly learn how to use my hands and fingers to eat. Encourage me to feed myself and let me hold a spoon.

As I get older, I will like foods with more texture. I'll be ready for:



Tofu



Beans

Mashed foods with some lumps and soft finger foods around 7 to 8 months.



Meatballs



Tangerine

Minced, chopped and some firmer finger foods around 8 to 12 months.



My first foods should be high in iron and zinc.



Give me a variety of foods.

- My first foods should be high in iron and zinc, especially if I am fully breastfed. Try fortified baby cereal or pureed meats, poultry, fish, cooked eggs and beans.
- Give me veggies with different colors like orange cooked carrots and green beans. The more veggies you give me now, the more I will eat when I am older.
- By 7 to 8 months, offer me a variety of food from all the food groups. These are grains, proteins, fruits, vegetables, and dairy.
- I like trying foods the family is eating. Mild herbs and aromatic spices let me try new flavors. I do not need added salt or sugar. Small amounts of healthy fats, like oil, are okay.
- Sometimes, it may take me more than 10 times to get familiar with a food and like it. Try giving me new foods with foods I already like.
- Around 9 to 12 months, I might like small pieces of peeled soft fruits and vegetables, cooked ground meat, dry cereal, toasted bread squares, soft tortilla, sliced cheese, and pasta.



The more veggies you give me now, the more I will eat when I am older.

Start giving me a cup



- Offer me water in a cup a few times a day starting when I am 6 months.
- By 12 months I want to be using cups, not bottles.
- After I am 1 year I can have cow, lactose-free, or plant-based milk as a beverage.
- Learn more in the WIC resource Time for a Cup.



I do not need these foods:

- Teas
- Sugary drinks like soda, sport drinks, and fruit drinks

Wait until I am older to eat these foods:

- Honey after I turn 1 year old
- 100% juice after I turn 1 year old
- Round, hard foods after I turn 4 years old. These foods may cause choking:
  - » Whole nuts or grapes
  - » Popcorn
  - » Hot dogs that are not cut up
  - » Hard candies





How much and how often do I want to eat?

It is important to watch for my hunger and fullness cues. Offer me healthy foods when I am hungry and let me stop when I am full. Let me choose what I want and how much.



When I am hungry, I may:

- Open my mouth when the spoon gets near
- Reach for the spoon or food
- Get excited when I see the food

When I am full, I may:

- Shake my head “no”
- Turn my head away from the food
- Keep my mouth closed when the spoon is near
- Push the food away

In the beginning, I just want to try foods. Offer me foods one or two times each day. Start with one or two teaspoons and slowly give me more as I show you I am hungry and interested in more.

It is important for me to enjoy mealtimes.
Do not worry about how much I eat.
My tummy is about the size of my fist.
Keep my portions small.



What about Food Allergies?

Many foods can cause a food allergy. Foods that are more likely to give me an allergic reaction are:

- peanuts
- eggs
- milk or dairy such as yogurt and cheese
- tree nuts
- soy
- wheat
- fish
- shellfish
- sesame

If I do not have severe eczema or an existing food allergy, introduce me to foods that are more likely to cause allergies along with other baby foods I have already tried. Trying these foods as an infant may keep me from getting a food allergy as I grow older.

If I have severe eczema or an existing food allergy, talk to my doctor before introducing me to these foods.



Possible signs of an allergic reaction

Skin or color changes:

- Itching or swelling of lips, tongue, or face
- Reactions can look different on different skin tones
- If I have lighter skin, look for bluish, flushed or color changes
- If I have darker skin, look for color changes in the lips, gums, tongue, or fingernails

Breathing problems:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Trouble breathing

Stomach problems:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Other signs

- Unusual sleepiness or drowsiness



What to do if there is an allergic reaction

- Stop giving me the food causing the reaction
- Call my doctor with any mild symptoms such as a small rash or itching
- Call 911 or go to the emergency room right away for any severe reactions such as breathing problems, color changes, or stomach issues





Peanuts



Eggs



Milk or Dairy



Tree Nuts



Soy



Wheat



Fish



Shellfish



Sesame

The first time you offer me one of the common allergy foods

Introduce one of these foods after I have tried a few other solid foods and am responding well to them. Pick a time when I will be awake for at least two hours so you can watch me carefully for any allergic reactions.



2 tsp

Start with 2 teaspoons once a day. Watch what happens when I eat the food. If I do not show signs of an allergic reaction, keep offering that food around 2 or 3 times a week to help me stay used to it.

Introducing foods safely

Ways to give me foods that have a higher chance of causing allergies.



Peanut Ways to give:

- Thin creamy peanut butter with water, breastmilk, or formula
- Moisten peanut powder with water, breastmilk, or formula
- Mix peanut butter into pureed food until the peanut butter is thinned



Egg Ways to give:

- Offer me well-cooked eggs or an infant “pancake” made with eggs and bananas



Milk or Dairy Ways to give:

- Offer me unsweetened cow’s milk yogurt or soft low-sodium pasteurized cheese
- Prepare my infant cereal with whole cow’s milk (do not give to me as a beverage until I am 1 year old)
- Examples of milk and dairy: plain whole-fat yogurt, soft cheese (mozzarella)

Tree Nuts

Ways to give:

- Thin creamy nut butter with water, breastmilk, or formula
- Mix nut butter into my pureed food until the nut butter is thinned
- Examples of nut butter: almond, cashew, pistachio, walnut, or pecan

Soy

Ways to give:

- Add soy milk to my infant cereal
- Try soy yogurt or smashed tofu

Wheat

Ways to give:

- Offer me infant wheat cereal, small pieces of bread or crackers
- Try pieces of well cooked pasta

Fish

Ways to give:

- Offer me pureed or bite-size fish or fish sticks
- Examples of fish: canned tuna, cod, salmon, or tilapia

Shellfish Ways to give:

- Offer me pureed or bite-size shellfish or crab cakes
- Examples of shellfish: crab, scallops, or shrimp

Sesame Ways to give:

- Offer me tahini thinned with water, breastmilk, or formula
- Mix ground sesame seeds in purees



Meals and snacks

Here are some ideas for how many solids to offer me each day. When I am breastfeeding, I may want to nurse more often. Follow my hunger and fullness cues.

6 to 8 months

How much breastmilk or formula do I need at this age?

- Around 4-6 feedings per day. When I am breastfeeding, I may want to nurse more often, including at night.
- Offer **before** solids during early introduction

How many meals and snacks will I eat?

- 1–2 small meals per day, gradually increasing as my interest grows
- Serving size for 6-8 months; 1–2 Tbsp (Tbsp = Tablespoon)



Food group	Recommended servings a day
Grains	1–2
Protein foods	1–2
Fruits	1–2
Vegetables	1–2
Dairy foods	0–1

Sample Daily Menu 6–8 Months

Breakfast

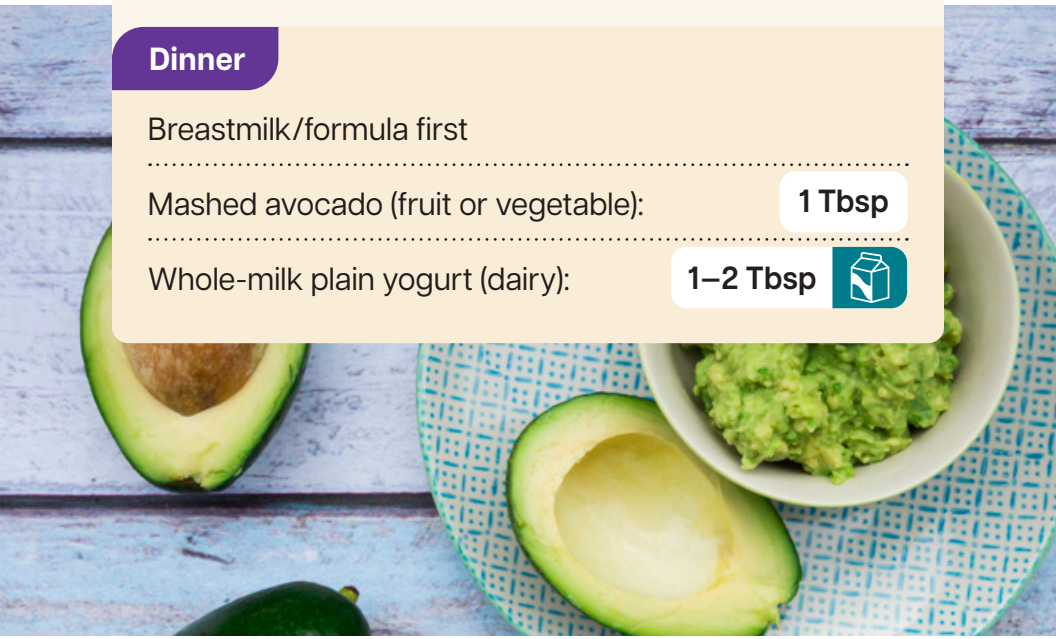
Breastmilk/formula first

Infant cereal (grain):	1–2 Tbsp
Thinned peanut butter mixed into infant cereal (protein and grain):	1 tsp
Mashed banana (fruit):	1 Tbsp

Lunch

Breastmilk/formula first

Pureed chicken (protein):	1 Tbsp
Mashed edamame (protein/vegetable):	1 Tbsp



Dinner

Breastmilk/formula first

Mashed avocado (fruit or vegetable):	1 Tbsp
Whole-milk plain yogurt (dairy):	1–2 Tbsp

8 to 10 months

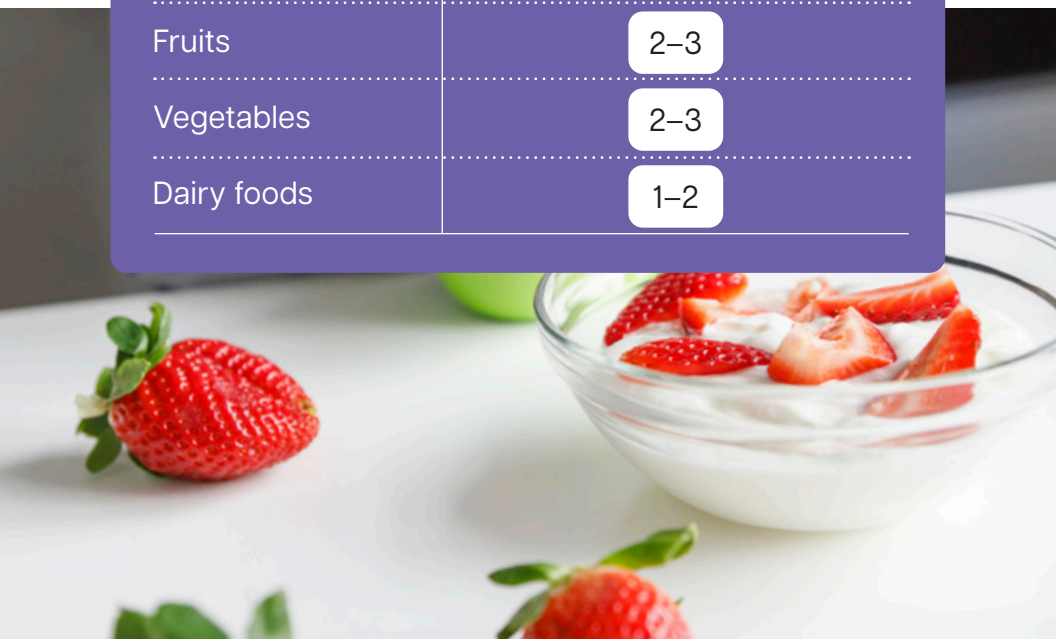
How much breastmilk or formula do I need at this age?

- Around 3-4 feedings per day. When I am breastfeeding, I may want to nurse more often, including at night.
- Offer me breastmilk or formula in a cup with my meal.

How many meals and snacks will I eat?

- 2–3 meals + 1–2 snacks
- Serving size for 8-10 months; 2–3 Tbsp (Tbsp = Tablespoon)

Food group	Recommended servings a day
Grains	2–3
Protein foods	2
Fruits	2–3
Vegetables	2–3
Dairy foods	1–2



Sample Daily Menu 8–10 Months

Breakfast

Well cooked scrambled egg (protein):	2–3 Tbsp
Diced strawberries (fruit):	2–3 Tbsp
Breastmilk/formula in a cup	

Snack

Whole-milk plain yogurt (dairy):	2–3 Tbsp
Soft banana chunks (fruit):	2–3 Tbsp

Lunch

Soft shredded beef (protein):	2–3 Tbsp
Mashed sweet potato (vegetable):	2–3 Tbsp
Small soft pieces of whole-grain bread (grain):	2–3 Tbsp
Breastmilk/formula in a cup	

Dinner

Diced soft cauliflower (vegetable):	2–3 Tbsp
Soft, cooked pasta pieces (grain):	2–3 Tbsp
Well-cooked flaked fish (protein):	2–3 Tbsp
Breastmilk/formula in a cup	

10 to 12 months

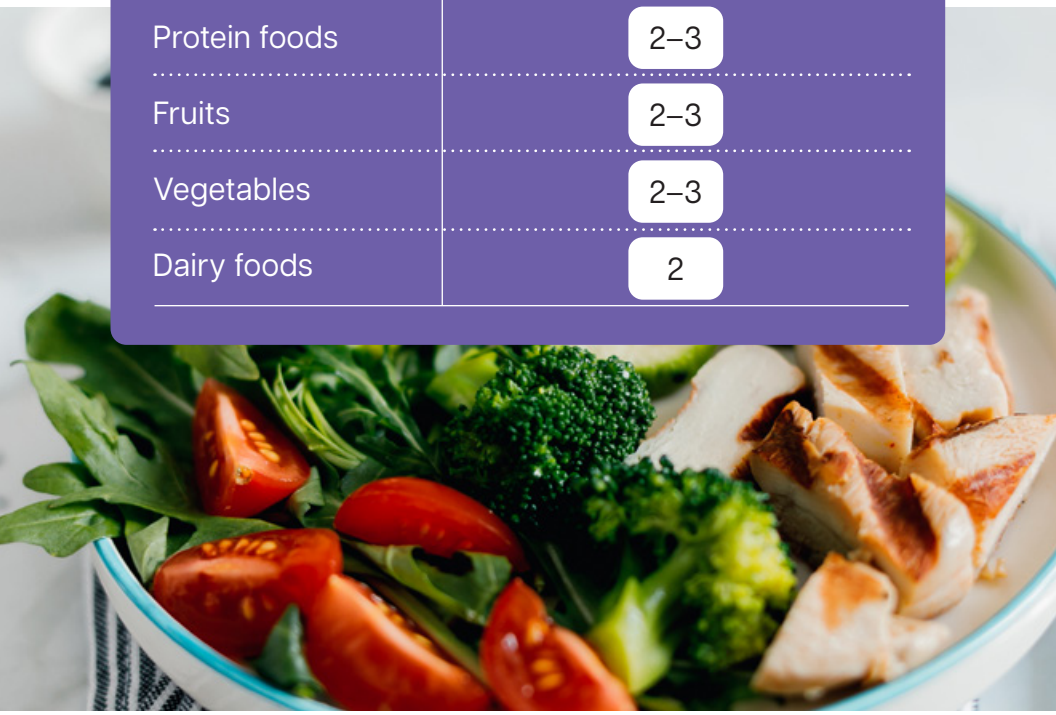
How much breastmilk or formula do I need at this age?

- Around 3-4 feedings per day. When I am breastfeeding, I may want to nurse more often, including at night.
- Offer me breastmilk or formula in a cup with my meal.

How many meals and snacks will I eat?

- 3 meals + 2–3 snacks
- Serving size for 10-12 months; 3–4 Tbsp (Tbsp = Tablespoon)

Food group	Recommended servings a day
Grains	3–4
Protein foods	2–3
Fruits	2–3
Vegetables	2–3
Dairy foods	2



Sample Daily Menu 10–12 Months

Breakfast

Mini whole-grain pancake pieces:	3–4 Tbsp
Scrambled egg (protein):	3–4 Tbsp
Soft peach chunks (fruit):	3–4 Tbsp

Breastmilk/formula in a cup

Snack

Whole-milk plain yogurt (dairy):	3–4 Tbsp
Soft banana chunks (fruit):	3–4 Tbsp

Lunch

Soft beef ground (protein):	3–4 Tbsp
Cooked diced carrots (vegetable):	3–4 Tbsp
Whole-grain pasta pieces (grain):	3–4 Tbsp

Breastmilk/formula in a cup

Snack

Thin and soft cheese strips (dairy):	3–4 Tbsp
Soft, dissolvable whole-grain crackers (grain):	3–4 pieces

Dinner

Chopped chicken (protein):	**3–4 Tbsp**
Chopped, soft broccoli (vegetable):	**3–4 Tbsp**
Mashed rice (grain):	**3–4 Tbsp**
Breastmilk/formula in a cup	

Connection at mealtimes

- I love to be with people. Let's eat together!
- Talk to me at meal times. Tell me about the foods I am eating. Tell me about your day. Smile and laugh with me.
- Turn off the television, computer and phone. Let's focus on being together.



Learning from watching

- I learn so much from watching and listening to all the people around me.
- Show me you like many different foods. When your face shows you don't like something, I think I should not like it.
- Offer me foods similar to what you are eating. I do not need salt or sugar in my food.



Interest and curiosity

- I am curious about new foods and things I see.
- When I point at a food, I may be asking "what's that?" I might not be ready or wanting to try it yet. And that's ok! Let me explore and learn.

Why I may not want to eat sometimes

- When I am not growing as fast, I may not eat as much. Sometimes I am just not hungry.
- I am getting better at remembering things, including the foods I like best. I may not want to eat a new food. Be patient. Keep trying.
- I like routines. When things change, I may get cranky and not want to eat. I do better when I know what to expect at mealtime.
- I like to use my fingers to learn. It is fun but can be messy. I may get frustrated if you try to be too neat and not let me explore.
- I need to have active time throughout the day to use my energy and practice all my new skills—crawling, walking, and standing. When I do not get enough active play, it may be hard for me to sit still and eat.
- I may be distracted by things around me and not want to focus on eating.







Keep me safe and healthy

- Wash your hands before and after preparing or touching my food. Wash my hands too. Germs could make me sick.
- Wash your hands before and after eating or handling my skin like with diaper changes too. This is important if the food has a higher chance of causing allergies. Over time, this can make my chances of developing an allergy to that food higher.
- Throw away any food left in my dish, and any breastmilk or formula left in my cup or bottle. You can keep my opened baby food container in the refrigerator for 2 days.

- Brush my teeth with a small soft toothbrush and a tiny smear of fluoride toothpaste (the size of a grain of rice) twice a day. Ask my doctor if I need fluoride drops.
- Take me to my doctor at 6, 9, and 12 months for my checkups and vaccinations.
- Keep me away from smoke from cigarettes, marijuana, or wildfires. Smoke causes health problems.
- Let me explore and learn. Make each room safe for me.
- Never put me to bed with a bottle. I could choke, get an earache, or hurt my teeth.





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Rev 07/26

