





INFANT DEVELOPMENT AND FEEDING GUIDELINES

AGE	DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERNS	FOODS TO OFFER
0 – 4 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Can only suck and swallow. ❖ Poor control of head and neck. ❖ Feeding cues include: rooting, lip smacking, sucking motion, fists to mouth, hands toward mouth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Offer breast milk or infant formula only. ❖ Feed according to cues not a schedule.
Near 6 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Can sit with support. ❖ Can hold head steady. ❖ Can close lips over spoon. ❖ Can keep food in mouth and swallow it. ❖ Begins up and down chewing motion. ❖ Shows interest in others eating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Offer iron-zinc fortified baby cereal (rice, oatmeal, or barley) or pureed/mashed meats or beans when infant shows signs of readiness listed under “developmental patterns”. ❖ Offer food by spoon. (Do not add cereal to the bottle). ❖ Stop feeding if baby resists.
6 – 8 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Can sit without support. ❖ Begins to chew by moving food around in the mouth. ❖ Can sip from a cup with help. ❖ Grasps and holds onto things. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Introduce baby to a variety of pureed foods from all food groups (vegetable, fruit, grain, meat/protein, dairy). Do not add sugar or salt. ❖ Add textures gradually, moving from pureed to mashed. ❖ Start with small amounts of formula or breast milk in a cup for practice. ❖ Let baby begin to self-feed. Allow infant to touch and feel the food despite the mess. ❖ Can start semi-solid foods such as mashed tofu or legumes, mashed potatoes such as sweet potatoes, mashed bananas, cottage cheese, yogurt and strained meat.
9 – 12 Months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Can pick up finger foods and get them into the mouth. ❖ Can hold a cup while sipping. ❖ Grabs for and holds a spoon. ❖ Develops a more mature chewing pattern. ❖ Shows improved balance while sitting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Offer well-cooked soft table foods. ❖ Offer foods that can be eaten with fingers. ❖ Make protein sources soft and moist: ground turkey or beef, soft pieces of chicken or fish, eggs, cooked beans. ❖ Can serve toasted oat rings, pieces of soft tortillas, unsalted crackers, sections of toasted bread, cooked noodles, rice. ❖ Offer breast milk, or formula in a cup with meals. Juice is not recommended for infants.
<p><i>Discuss questions/concerns about feeding your infant with your health care provider.</i></p>		