Feed more as the baby grows

Begin to feed at 6 months
Type of food: Soft gruel, well-mashed food
How often: Two to three times each day
How much: Two to three tablespoons at each meal

From 6 up to 9 months
Type of food: Mashed food
How often: Two to three times each day and 1 to 2 snacks
How much: Two to three tablespoons up to half (1/2) cup at each meal

From 9 up to 12 months
Type of food: Finely chopped or mashed food and foods that baby can pick up with his or her fingers
How often: Three to four times each day and 1 to 2 snacks
How much: At least half (1/2) cup at each meal

From 12 up to 24 months
Type of food: Family foods, chopped or mashed if necessary
How often: Three to four times each day and 1 to 2 snacks
How much: Three-quarters (3/4) up to one full cup at each meal

* A snack is extra food between meals
** A cup is 250 ml

Things to remember

* Between the age of 6 months and 2 years, a child needs to continue breastfeeding.
* If you are not breastfeeding, feed your baby two cups (500 ml total) of milk, divided throughout the day.
* Avoid giving a baby tea, coffee, soda, and other sugary or coloured drinks.
* Limit amount of fresh juices to accommodate the meal. Give your baby clean water.
* Always feed the baby using a clean, open cup. Do not use bottles, teats, or cup with a mouth piece.

* Continue to take your child for growth monitoring and promotion, immunizations, and to the clinic for well-baby check-ups.
* During illness give the baby small, frequent meals and more fluids, including breastmilk or other liquids. Encourage the baby to eat a variety of (his or her) favourite soft foods. After illness, feed more food and more often than usual for at least two weeks.

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From 6 Months

What you need to know

* For the first 6 months, exclusively breastfeed your baby (no other milks, foods, or liquids, not even sips of water).

* When your baby reaches 6 months, begin to introduce other foods and continue breastfeeding on demand both day and night.

* Breastmilk continues to be an important part of the diet until the baby is at least 2 years.

* When feeding a baby between 6 and 12 months old, always give breastmilk first before giving other foods.

* After 6 months of age, children should receive vitamin A supplements twice a year. They also need de-worming medicine twice a year, beginning at 12 months. Consult your health care provider.

When your baby first starts to eat

* Give your baby one or two tablespoons of soft food three times each day. Gradually increase the frequency, amount, thickness, and variety of food.

  ![Too thin](Image) ![Good thickness](Image)

* Enrich the baby’s porridge (sorghum, maize, millet, wheat,...) and with breastmilk, animal milks, mashed groundnuts, or soy flour. It is best to mix two to three types of flours. Make sure the groundnuts and soy beans are well pre-cooked.

* Your baby needs more than breastmilk and porridge. Offer a variety of foods, like mashed fruits, vegetables, and tubers and animal-source foods.

* Start animal-source foods as early and as often as possible.

Hygiene, safe preparation, and storage of foods

* Wash your hands with clean, running water and soap before preparing food, and before feeding your baby. Baby’s hands should be washed also. Wash your hands after changing nappies or going to the toilet.

* Wash all bowls, cups, and utensils with clean water and soap. Dry on a rack and keep covered before using.

* Prepare food in a clean area and keep it covered. A baby should have his or her own cup and bowl.

* Serve food immediately after preparation.

* Thoroughly reheat any food that has been kept for more than an hour.

* Babies gradually learn to feed themselves. An adult or an older child should encourage the baby to eat enough food and ensure that the food remains clean.

* Parents should ensure that the baby has received the food that he or she needs each day.

* A little vegetable oil can be added to the baby’s porridge or mashed foods. Infants only need a very small amount of oil (no more than half [1/2] teaspoon per day).