



## Feeding your baby: Sample meals for babies 6 to 12 months old

This resource provides sample meals, snacks, and menus for babies who are 6 to 12 months old. It includes information on food safety and amounts of food to offer your baby.

### How do I prepare food safely for my baby?

#### Choose from a variety of safe textures

Your baby will be able to eat soft textures, even before they have teeth. This includes foods that are:

- Lumpy. Offer foods with lumpy textures by no later than 9 months
- Tender-cooked and finely minced, pureed, mashed or ground
- Safe finger foods, such as strips or pieces of soft-cooked vegetables, soft fruits and toast

By around 8 to 12 months of age, your baby will be able to bite and chew chopped foods.

#### Follow these tips to reduce the risk of choking and food poisoning

When preparing vegetables and fruits:

- Wash produce. Peel skin as needed
- Remove seeds or pits
- Cut grapes, cherry tomatoes and large berries like cherries into quarters
- Grate or cook firm vegetables and fruits until they're soft enough to be squished with your fingers. For example, carrots and apples. Soft vegetables and fruits do not need to be cooked. For example, ripe bananas, melons and avocados
- Finely chop stringy foods like celery and pineapple

When preparing protein foods:

- Cook eggs until the yolk is firm
- Cook tofu
- Remove the skin and bones from fish and poultry such as chicken, duck and turkey

- Be sure fish, shellfish, poultry and meat such as beef, bison, goat, lamb, pork and wild game are fully cooked. Foods are fully cooked when they reach their [safe cooking temperatures](#)
- Do not offer nut or seed butters alone, such as on a spoon. Instead, thinly spread smooth nut or seed butters on foods such as toast or crackers, or mix them into infant cereal
- Do not offer whole peanuts, nuts or seeds
- Grate hard cheeses such as cheddar

When preparing whole grain foods:

- Avoid grains mixed with foods that are common choking risks. For example, bread with nuts, large seeds or raisins

Do not offer foods that are round, hard, sticky and difficult to swallow. This includes popcorn, marshmallows, dried fruit like raisins, and gummies or hard candies. Do not offer chewable vitamins.

### How much food should I offer to my baby?

The amount of food to offer your baby will change depending on their appetite. When you first introduce solid foods, your baby may only eat around 2 to 3 tablespoons of food a day. Start by offering one to 2 teaspoons at a time. As their appetite increases, offer more food.

Remember to watch and listen for your baby's hunger and fullness cues and let them decide how much to eat.

Your baby may be hungry if they:

- Reach for or point to food
- Open their mouth, lean forward or get excited for food
- Get upset if food is taken away

Your baby may be full if they:

- Close their mouth when food is offered
- Push food away
- Refuse to eat or turn their head away

Here are some examples of portions to offer your growing baby:

- 2 to 3 tablespoons (30 to 45 mL) of cooked vegetables, grains, meats, poultry, fish, beans, lentils or tofu
- Half a medium egg
- 2 tablespoons (30 mL) of shredded cheese or yogurt
- 3 to 5 tablespoons (45 to 75 mL) of soft fruit
- A quarter to a half cup (60 to 125 mL) of prepared hot or cold cereal
- Half a piece of toast or muffin
- A quarter of a pita or other flatbread

### How often should I offer food to my baby?

The number of times you offer solid foods to your baby each day depends on their age and appetite. Work towards the following:

- By 8 months: 2 to 3 meals and 1 to 2 snacks
- By 12 months: 3 meals and 2 to 3 snacks

Try to have your baby's meals at the same time as family meals so that you can eat together as often as possible. This can help your baby learn food skills, develop healthy eating patterns and be more likely to try and enjoy a variety of foods.

### What should I feed my baby?

Your baby can eat many of the same nutritious foods that the family eats, changing the size and texture of food as needed. When preparing meals and snacks for your baby, remember to:

- Offer iron-rich foods at least 2 times each day
- Use little or no added salt or sugar
- Include sources of fat such as vegetable oil, nut or seed butters, soft margarine, cheese, fatty fish and avocado. Nutritious sources of fat are important for your growing child
- Offer new foods. You may need to offer a new food more than 10 times before your child gives it a try or

enjoys eating it. Pairing new foods with familiar foods may help

- Offer different food combinations and a variety of tastes and textures

The chart below includes examples of foods that you may choose to offer your baby. When planning your baby's meals and snacks, you can use these suggestions as a guide:

- Meals: Offer foods from 2 to 3 food groupings
- Snacks: Offer foods from one to 3 food groupings

#### Vegetable and fruit ideas:

- Ripe soft avocados, bananas, blackberries, kiwi, mangos, melons, oranges, peaches, pears, raspberries, strawberries, tomatoes
- Cooked broccoli, green beans, asparagus, carrots, sweet potatoes, beets, bell peppers
- Grated raw apples, carrots
- Cut into quarters: cherry tomatoes, grapes, large blueberries
- Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables with no added salt, sugar or sugar substitutes

#### Protein food ideas:

Iron-rich protein foods:

- Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu
- Beans, lentils, chickpeas, split peas. If canned, choose those with no added salt
- Nut butters added to baby cereal or thinly spread on crackers or toast

Other protein foods:

- Full-fat plain yogurt, unsalted cottage cheese
- Grated or small pieces of hard cheese, like cheddar

#### Whole grain food ideas:

- Iron-fortified infant cereal
- Unsweetened O-shaped cereal
- Toast, bread, pita, roti, Bannock, tortilla
- Rice, pasta, quinoa, couscous, barley
- Unsalted crackers

## What are some sample menus for my baby?

Below are sample one-day menus for 6 to 9 and 9 to 12 month old babies. Solid foods can be offered before or after human milk or formula. Do what works best for you and your baby. The amount your baby drinks will change as they start to eat more food.

### Sample menus for 6 to 9 months

| Sample Menu 1 |   |
|---------------|---|
| Breakfast     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini peanut butter muffins made with iron-fortified infant cereal</li> <li>• Orange, wedges with membrane removed</li> </ul> |
| Snack         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full-fat plain yogurt</li> </ul>   |
| Lunch         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken, minced</li> <li>• Cooked bell pepper, strips</li> </ul>   |
| Snack         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheddar cheese, grated</li> <li>• Unsalted infant crackers</li> </ul>  |
| Dinner        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beans, mashed</li> <li>• Tortilla, strips</li> <li>• Avocado, slices</li> </ul>  |

| Sample Menu 2 |   |
|---------------|---|
| Breakfast     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iron-fortified infant cereal</li> <li>• Strawberries, mashed</li> </ul>  |
| Snack         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banana, spears</li> </ul>  |
| Lunch         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salmon, minced</li> <li>• Cooked sweet potato, mashed with lumps</li> </ul>  |
| Snack         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooked pear, wedges</li> </ul>   |
| Dinner        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ground beef or lentils mixed with mashed potato</li> <li>• Cooked broccoli, large pieces of floret or stalk</li> </ul> |

### Sample menu for 9 to 12 months

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Breakfast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat toast with thinly spread peanut butter, cut into strips</li> <li>• Blueberries, flattened</li> </ul> |
| Snack     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsalted cottage cheese</li> <li>• Canned peaches in water, chopped</li> </ul>                                   |
| Lunch     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dahl (lentil stew)</li> <li>• Naan, strips</li> <li>• Green peas, lightly mashed</li> </ul>                      |
| Snack     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grapes, cut into quarters</li> </ul>   |
| Dinner    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken, chopped</li> <li>• Brown rice</li> <li>• Canned cut green beans, no salt added</li> </ul>               |
| Snack     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Papaya, spears sprinkled with shredded coconut</li> </ul>  |

### For more information

[HealthLink File #69c Baby's First Foods](#)

[HealthLink File #110b Preventing Choking in Babies and Young Children](#)

[HealthLink File #69i Iron-Rich Foods for Babies and Toddlers](#)