

Feeding by Age

6 to 9 Months

Your baby may:

- continue to breastfeed or chestfeed
- pick up food between their fingers and palms and put it in their mouth
- bite off food
- close their lips around a cup held for them
- chew by munching up and down, and by moving food from front to back and to the sides of their mouth



DID YOU KNOW?

Human milk is still your child's most important drink.

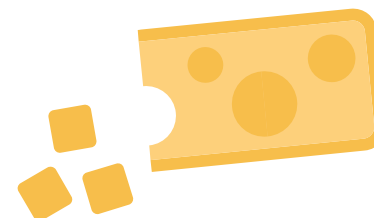


TRY THIS

Instead of jarred baby food, try mashing soft and cooked family foods with a fork. Add water or human milk to moisten, and try mixing different foods together.

Feeding tips:

- ✓ At about 6 months, begin introducing finger foods and foods that are soft, lumpy, mashed, ground, pureed, finely minced and tender-cooked.
- ✓ Start with iron-rich foods, offering them 2 or more times a day. Then add more variety.
- ✓ Feed solid foods before or after breastfeeding or chestfeeding, depending on what works best. This may change over time.
- ✓ Offer family foods made with little or no added salt or sugar.
- ✓ Start with small amounts and offer more based on their hunger and fullness cues.
- ✓ Give sips of clean water from an open cup, but don't let them fill up on water.
- ✓ Give your child lots of practice feeding themselves.
- ✓ Sit down and eat together as often as possible.
- ✓ By the time your baby is 9 months old, offer 2 to 3 meals and 1 to 2 snacks a day, in addition to human milk.
- ✓ Introduce common allergens one at a time. These include milk and milk products, eggs, thinly spread peanut butter and tree-nut butters, soy, seafood (fish, shellfish), wheat and sesame. (See [Understanding Food Allergies](#))
- ✓ Be aware of choking hazards. (See [Reducing Choking Hazards](#))
- ✗ Don't give your child honey or food made with honey, even if it's cooked or pasteurized. (See [Safe, Healthy Foods and Drinks](#))
- ✗ Avoid sugary drinks, including 100% fruit juice.



9 to 12 Months

Your baby may:

- bite and chew up and down
- use their thumb and fingers to pick up small pieces of food
- hold a cup in 2 hands
- try to use a spoon
- drop things from their feeding chair
- want to sit at the family table and try to feed themselves

Feeding tips:

- ✓ Offer 3 meals and 1 or 2 sit-down snacks at regular times each day.
- ✓ Sit and eat with your toddler.
- ✓ Offer solid foods before or after you breastfeed or chestfeed, whichever works better. This may change over time.
- ✓ Offer iron-rich foods 2 or more times a day.
- ✓ Keep offering new family foods with different textures, like chopped, mashed or shredded.
- ✓ Offer family foods that are made without added sugar or salt.
- ✓ Give them small amounts of clean water in an open cup.
- ✓ Encourage them to feed themselves.
- ✓ Let your toddler decide how much to eat.
- ✓ Be aware of choking hazards. (See [Reducing Choking Hazards](#))
- ✗ Don't give your child honey or food made with honey, even if it's cooked or pasteurized. (See [Safe, Healthy Foods and Drinks](#))

12 to 24 Months

Your toddler may:

- feed themselves – messily – with their fingers or a spoon
- bite and chew food more easily
- eat a variety of foods with different textures
- eat very little or a lot, depending on the day
- play with their food
- need to be offered a new food many times before trying it
- eat most foods without coughing or gagging

What are family foods?

Foods that your whole family normally eats at mealtime. Giving your toddler foods from the family table rather than store-bought baby food provides them with a wider range of textures, tastes and nutrients.

Feeding tips:

- ✓ Offer 3 meals and 2 or 3 sit-down snacks at regular times each day.
- ✓ Include your toddler in regular family meals.
- ✓ Give them iron-rich foods 2 or more times a day.



BRAIN BUILDER

Include your toddler at the family table and eat together as often as possible. Sharing meals will help them learn language and social skills and get used to family foods. Use the time to talk to them about what they see, taste and feel.

- ✓ Offer a variety of food textures, including finger foods.
- ✓ Give them family foods made with little or no added salt or sugar.
- ✓ Offer new foods alongside other foods they like.
- ✓ Continue to offer foods your toddler rejects, but don't pressure them.
- ✓ Give them the same foods prepared in different ways.
- ✓ Include healthy higher-fat foods like salmon, avocado, cheese and nut butters.
- ✓ Give them water to drink between meals and snacks.
- ✓ Give your child enough time to eat.
- ✓ Let your toddler decide how much to eat.
- ✓ Continue to breastfeed or chestfeed.
- ✓ Be aware of choking hazards. (See [Reducing Choking Hazards](#))
- ✗ Limit foods high in salt and sugar like chips, candy and cookies.
- ✗ Limit sugary drinks like fruit juice, pop, sports drinks, energy drinks and fruit-flavoured beverages.
- ✗ Avoid all foods and drinks with caffeine or artificial sweeteners.



KEY TAKEAWAY

Help your toddler get enough iron by offering iron-rich foods 2 or more times a day at meals or snacks. Include meat, poultry, fish, iron-fortified infant cereals, cooked eggs and tofu, and mashed, cooked beans and other legumes.

24 to 36 Months

Your toddler may:

- hold a cup (but spill a lot)
- feed themselves cut-up family foods
- eat very little or a lot, depending on the day
- show strong food likes and dislikes
- need to be offered a new food many times before trying it

Feeding tips:

- ✓ Offer 3 meals and 2 or 3 sit-down snacks at regular times each day.
- ✓ Include your toddler in regular family meals, and eat together as often as possible.
- ✓ Offer a variety of foods from [Canada's food guide](#).
- ✓ Plain, lower fat cow's milk (1% or 2%) or plain, fortified soy beverage can begin to replace whole (3.25%) cow's milk.
- ✓ Include foods high in energy and healthy fats, like avocado, fatty fish, thinly spread nut and seed butters and vegetable oils.
- ✓ Continue to breastfeed or chestfeed for as long as you and your child want.
- ✓ Offer water to drink between meals and snacks.
- ✓ Let your toddler decide how much to eat.
- ✓ Be aware of choking hazards. (See [Reducing Choking Hazards](#))
- ✗ Limit foods high in salt and sugar like chips, candy and cookies.
- ✗ Limit sugary drinks like fruit juice, pop, sports drinks, energy drinks and fruit-flavoured beverages.
- ✗ Avoid all foods and drinks with caffeine or artificial sweeteners.

Sample 1-day menu for a 24- to 36-month-old

Breakfast:

- oatmeal with sliced blueberries or banana
- plain cow's milk (1%, 2% or 3.25%) or plain fortified soy beverage

Snack 1:

- banana bread thinly spread with peanut or nut butter
- water

Lunch:

- salmon or egg salad sandwich on whole-wheat bread
- finely chopped or very thinly sliced red peppers and cucumbers
- plain cow's milk (1%, 2% or 3.25%) or plain fortified soy beverage
- canned peaches

Snack 2:

- grated cheese
- finely chopped or very thinly sliced apples
- water

Dinner:

- whole-wheat spaghetti with tomato and meat or lentil sauce
- bite-sized pieces of cooked carrot and broccoli florets
- plain cow's milk (1%, 2% or 3.25%) or plain fortified soy beverage



DID YOU KNOW?

Fruit juice is a sugary drink, and children don't need it. If you offer it, limit it to no more than 125 ml (½ cup) a day, and serve it at meal or snack time in an open cup.



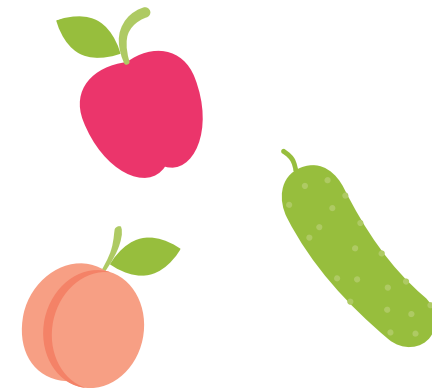
FAMILY STORY

I was amazed at how much better my son ate when we sat together and had the same foods. I made meals we could both eat and cut his up into small pieces he could pick up. It was so cute watching him study – and copy – how I ate.



TRY THIS

Start each feeding with a small amount of food. Give your toddler more based on their hunger and fullness cues (see [Eating Well](#)). It's normal for their appetite to change from day to day. Trust that they'll eat the amount they need.



Daily Food Suggestions

Offer your toddler a variety of healthy family foods plus human milk every day. This table is based on the groupings in [Canada's food guide](#).

	Meals and Snacks per day	Vegetables and Fruit	Whole Grain Foods	Protein Foods
6 to 9 months	<p>2-3 solid food feedings and 1-2 snacks.</p> <p>Continue to breastfeed or chestfeed.</p> <p>If your child isn't breastfeeding or chestfeeding, give store-bought infant formula.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> soft-cooked vegetables soft fruits like banana and kiwi canned fruit peeled, pitted and cooked hard fruits like apple and pear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iron-fortified infant cereal cooked rice and pasta oat ring cereal crackers, roti, pita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tender-cooked, finely minced or shredded pieces of meat, poultry, fish or shellfish mashed or diced cooked egg, tofu or legumes peanut butter or nut butter spread thinly on toast or crackers yogurt, cottage cheese, grated cheese
9 to 12 months	<p>3 solid food feedings and 1-2 snacks.</p> <p>Continue to breastfeed or chestfeed.</p> <p>If your child isn't breastfeeding or chestfeeding, you can start to offer small amounts of whole (3.25%) cow's milk. (See Safe, Healthy Foods and Drinks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> soft-cooked vegetables grated raw vegetables cooked or grated hard fruits soft fruits like banana and kiwi canned fruit peeled, pitted and cooked hard fruits like apple and pear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iron-fortified infant cereal whole grain toast, pasta, rice, crackers small pieces of bannock, tortillas, roti and other breads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small, tender-cooked pieces of meat, poultry, fish or shellfish mashed or diced cooked egg, tofu, legumes peanut butter or nut butter spread thinly on toast or crackers yogurt, cottage cheese, grated cheese, whole (3.25%) cow's milk
12 to 24 months	<p>3 meals and 2-3 snacks.</p> <p>Continue to breastfeed or chestfeed.</p> <p>If your toddler isn't breastfeeding or chestfeeding, offer 2 cups (500 ml) whole (3.25%) cow's milk or soy-based infant formula with meals. (See Safe, Healthy Foods and Drinks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small pieces of soft fruits and vegetables cooked or grated vegetables cooked or grated hard fruits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> whole grain hot and cold cereal brown rice, whole grain pasta, congee whole grain crackers and toast whole grain bannock, tortillas, roti and other breads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tender-cooked ground, chopped or cubed lean meat, poultry, fish or shellfish mashed legumes whole cooked egg cooked tofu peanut butter or nut butter spread thinly on toast or crackers yogurt, cottage cheese, grated cheese, whole (3.25%) cow's milk or soy-based infant formula
24 to 36 months	<p>3 meals and 2-3 snacks.</p> <p>Continue to breastfeed or chestfeed if you wish.</p> <p>If your child isn't breastfeeding or chestfeeding, offer 2 cups (500 ml) plain cow's milk (1%, 2% or 3.25%) or plain fortified soy beverage each day with meals. (See Safe, Healthy Foods and Drinks)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small pieces of soft fruits and vegetables cooked or grated vegetables cooked or grated hard fruits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> whole grain hot and cold cereal brown rice, whole grain pasta, congee whole grain crackers and toast whole grain bannock, tortillas, roti and other breads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tender-cooked ground, chopped or cubed lean meat, poultry, fish or shellfish mashed legumes whole cooked egg cooked tofu peanut butter or nut butter spread thinly on toast or crackers yogurt, cottage cheese, grated cheese, plain cow's milk (1%, 2% or 3.25%), or plain fortified soy beverage