

Help Feed Me...Right from the Start

When can I eat more?

As I get older, I might be ready for 2 or more tablespoons of baby cereal 2 times a day. You can give it to me between breast milk or formula feedings. My appetite might change from day to day. This is okay.

Please wait until I am 6 months old before trying any food other than breast milk or formulas.



With your help, I will learn to like other foods.

After I am 6 months old, I might be ready to try plain, smooth foods without added sweeteners or salt. Feed me from a bowl, not from a jar. Give me only one new food at a time and watch for any signs that I don't feel well. Please be patient with me. It might take several tries before I like a new food!

I would also like to try pureed or mashed vegetables, fruits and meats. I won't be ready for some of my family's favorite foods until I am at least 7 or 8 months old. Many combination foods have more starch than I can handle right now.



Am I ready for a spoon?

My name is _____.

I am _____ months old.



State of North Carolina • Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health • Nutrition Services Branch
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I am your baby. I need a spoon, but please wait until I am ready.

I will show you when I am ready!



I might be ready for a spoon when I am 6 months old. I can take food from a spoon when I am able to do all of these things:

- ♥ Sit with little support.
- ♥ Hold my head steady.
- ♥ Stop pushing my tongue out when my lips are touched.
- ♥ Show I want food by opening my mouth to take it from a spoon.

To keep me safe and healthy, please do not put anything but breast milk or formula in my bottle.



What if I eat solids before I am ready?



Only feed me breast milk or formula until I show you I am ready to eat food from a spoon. If you feed me anything else before I am ready:

- ♥ I might get upset.
- ♥ I might get a tummy ache.
- ♥ I will not grow faster.
- ♥ I will not fall asleep more easily or sleep longer.

With your help, I can use a spoon.



Start with baby cereal that you can buy with WIC food instruments. Try baby rice cereal first. Mix 1 tablespoon of the cereal with 4 tablespoons of breast milk or formula so that it's thin and runny. Please don't add sugar, honey, corn syrup or salt.

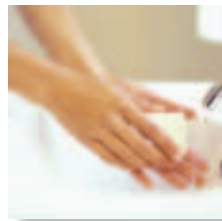
I can have cereal once a day if I like it. Later on, I might like it thicker. Just add less liquid.

When you feed me:

- ♥ Make sure that I am sitting up straight.
- ♥ Face me while holding the spoon to my lips.
- ♥ Stop if I turn my head away, close my mouth tightly or get upset.
- ♥ If I won't open my mouth, try again in a week.

Later, I can try baby oatmeal or barley cereal. Make sure to give me only one at a time. Wait a week before trying the next kind of cereal. Watch for signs that new cereals do not make me feel well.

Keep me safe.



If I don't feel well I might show you by vomiting, wheezing, getting a skin rash or having diarrhea. Stop feeding me the cereal and tell my doctor what happened. You also can keep me safe by:

- ♥ Washing your hands before making my food.
- ♥ Throwing away food that I do not eat.
- ♥ Talking to my doctor about when I should start other foods if our family has food allergies or if I was born too early.