

CACFP Infant Meal Patterns



Breakfast	
0-3 months	✧ 4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk
4-7 months	✧ 4-8 fluid ounces formula or breast milk ✧ 0-3 tablespoons infant cereal
8-11 months	✧ 6-8 fluid ounces formula or breast milk ✧ AND 2-4 tablespoons infant cereal ✧ AND 1-4 tablespoons fruit and/or vegetable

Snack	
0-3 months	✧ 4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk
4-7 months	✧ 4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk
8-11 months	✧ 2-4 fluid ounces formula, breast milk, or fruit juice ✧ 0-1/2 bread ✧ OR 0-2 crackers

Lunch or Supper	
0-3 months	✧ 4-6 fluid ounces formula or breast milk
4-7 months	✧ 4-8 fluid ounces formula or breast milk ✧ 0-3 tablespoons fruit and/or vegetable ✧ 0-3 tablespoons infant cereal
8-11 months	✧ 6-8 fluid ounces formula or breast milk ✧ AND 1-4 tablespoons fruit and/or vegetable ✧ AND 2-4 tablespoons infant cereal ✧ AND/OR 1-4 tablespoons meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas ✧ OR 1/2-2 ounces of cheese ✧ OR 1-4 ounces (volume) of cottage cheese ✧ OR 1-4 ounces (weight) of cheese food or cheese spread

Important Reminders

- ✧ **Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron fortified.**
- ✧ **It is recommended that breast milk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months of age.**
- ✧ **If a breastfed infant *regularly* consumes less than the minimum amount of breast milk per feeding, then “less than the minimum” quantity of breast milk can be offered at meals. However, additional breast milk should be offered if the infant is still showing signs of hunger after the initial meal.**
- ✧ **A serving of infant cereal, fruit, or vegetable may be optional for infants ages 4-7 months.**
- ✧ **A serving of bread or crackers may be optional for infants aged 8-11 months.**
- ✧ **All fruit juice must be *full-strength*.**
- ✧ **All bread and bread alternates must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.**
- ✧ **Be sure to have parents of enrolled infants complete and sign a Provision of Breastmilk or Infant Formula form, available at <http://www.nutritionnc.com/snp/forms.htm>**
- ✧ **The current list of iron-fortified infant formulas that do not require a medical statement can be found at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/regs-policy/infantmeals/formulalist.htm>**

Infant and Feeding Questions and Answers

- 1. Question: How can you serve “0” tablespoons of food according to the Infant Meal Pattern food chart?**

Answer: Certain foods are listed as “0” tablespoons to let you know that the food is optional and should be served at your discretion. Also, you may serve less than 1 tablespoon of those foods.
- 2. Question: Does an infant have to eat only at the specified meal times?**

Answer: No. The meal pattern states breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack, but that is only a guideline. Babies may need to eat every 2 to 4 hours or more frequently than the specified times.
- 3. Question: Why are some of the food portions so small?**

Answer: The portions listed are the minimum amount required by the infant feeding regulations. You may serve larger portions to those babies who would like more.
- 4. Question: Why is fruit juice not required at breakfast, lunch, and supper?**

Answer: The use of fruit juice, in addition to the required amount of formula or milk at each meal would be too much liquid and could discourage the baby from eating solids.
- 5. Question: Can infants less than four months of age be claimed for reimbursement?**

Answer: Yes, the program recognizes the non-food related cost of serving infants and allows reimbursement for meals containing only breast milk and infant formula.
- 6. Question: Are low iron formulas approvable?**

Answer: No. Low iron formulas are not approvable on the CACFP.

Exception: The infant’s parents may obtain a signed medical statement from the infant’s physician stating the reason why the infant may not have iron-fortified infant formulas and the formulas to be substituted.
- 7. Question: Can infants less than 8 months of age be claimed if on whole milk instead of iron-fortified infant formulas or breast milk?**

Answer: No.

Exception: If there is a signed medical statement on file.
- 8. Question: Can fortified adult cereals be substituted for the iron-fortified dry infant cereal for older infants (8 months of age)?**

Answer: No. Adult cereals do not provide infants with the same kind of easily absorbed iron as the iron-fortified cereals do. In addition, adult cereals often contain added sugar or salt. USDA requires providers to supply iron-fortified infant cereal up to the infant’s first birthday to claim the infant’s meals for reimbursement. Iron fortified infant cereal is a requirement at breakfast. However, at lunch and supper, iron-fortified infant cereal is optional.