

TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Mealtime can be a fun and special time for interacting with your baby.

Most babies are very adept at communicating their needs. The best tactic in feeding an infant is to observe, trust and respect your baby's signals of self regulation.

Your baby's hunger signals include:

mouthing	sucking movements
rooting	clenched fists or fingers over chest or tummy
crying	hands to mouth

When your baby needs a rest or break during the feeding, he let's you know by:

crying	pulling away
back arching	spitting up
choking	looking away

When this occurs, stop the feeding and change his position. softly and gently pat him until he's calm.

Your baby also enjoys socializing during a feeding. She will initiate social interaction by:

smiling	laughing
searching or looking for your eyes reaching out to touch you	

It is important to respond to your baby's sounds as these sounds are the beginning of your baby's language. Your voice can be soothing and exciting. Babies respond also to different sounds and voice levels such as singing, humming, or a change in pitch. Touch is an important method of interacting with your baby. Most babies enjoy affectionate strokes, pats and occasional kisses during mealtime.

When your baby is full or satisfied, she'll let you know by:

spitting out the nipple	dozing off
turning away	back arching
pushing nipple or food away	
extended or relaxed arms along side of body	
extended or relaxed fingers	
starting to bite or play with the nipple rather than suck	

Providing facial and eye contact during a feeding helps you to know each other. When breast or bottle feeding, most babies like to be held closely and provided with good head support. This helps to develop their trust in you. Baby's head should be higher than hips which helps with swallowing and prevents choking. Never prop a bottle or let baby feed himself in bed. Bottle propping may cause earaches, bottle mouth and choking.

Solid foods are introduced to provide for your infant nutritionally and to encourage and support developmental changes. Your baby may be developmentally ready for solid foods when:

1. tongue protrusion fades, able to transfer food to the back mouth for swallowing
2. opens mouth and leans forward
3. demonstrates head and neck control, can sit with minimal support
4. demonstrates hand to mouth motions
5. shows early chewing motions

It is best to introduce iron fortified infant rice cereal (the iron in infant cereals is more readily absorbed and rice is the least allergenic food) .Cereal should be introduced by spoon, not in a bottle.

These foods should not be introduced until one year as they commonly cause allergies:

pasteurized milk	nuts
egg whites	citrus fruits (tomatoes, oranges, grapefruit)
wheat	

The following foods should be avoided because they are harmful:

- alcoholic beverages
- honey (in any form for babies less than 12 months old)
- caffeine (cola drinks, coffee, some teas and chocolate)
- medication that can be bought without a prescription, *unless directed by your doctor*
- prescription medication belonging to someone else

The following foods should be avoided because they may cause choking:

potato chips	popcorn
berries	raw carrots
corn	celery sticks
small candies	raw apple
nuts, chunky peanut butter	fruits with seeds
raw peas	raisins, dried fruits
whole hot dogs	grapes, <i>unless peeled and quartered</i>

The following foods should be avoided because they take the place of nourishing foods and they encourage a sweet tooth which often leads to overweight and tooth decay:

chocolate	sweet drinks such as kool aid
pastries	cookies
soft drinks	cake
other highly sweetened candy food and beverages	