

INFANT DIET

Solid Foods

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends all babies be kept on breast milk or formula through the infant's first years of life. Nutritionally, infants do not need solids until four to six months of age.

The best way to introduce solids is to start with a small amount of rice cereal (one to two tablespoons) mixed with breast milk or formula. Always use a spoon and bowl for solids and avoid placing solids in the bottle unless this is specifically recommended by your doctor for medical reasons. Try rice cereal feedings once or twice a day for one week. If your baby tolerates this without evidence of intolerance such as vomiting, diarrhea, or skin rash, you may progress to jar foods. Start with Stage 1 single item foods such as green beans or squash. Remember to have one week between new foods and never start more than one new food at once. You may feed your baby one-third to one-half a jar twice a day until you are sure they tolerate it, then the amount can be increased. Remember breast milk or formula is still your baby's main source of nutrition in the first year of life.

After your baby has been through all the stage 1 foods (usually by around six to seven months of age) you may progress to stage 2 foods. Your baby may want two to three solid meals (baby food) per day. At this point, the introduction of teething biscuits and soft finger foods is appropriate. By eight to nine months of age stage 3 and table foods may be introduced. Please avoid eggs, peanut butter and whole milk until after one year of age. Honey should also be avoided in the first year of life due to the risk of infant botulism.

After one year of age your baby should mainly be on table foods. Be cautious of foods your baby could choke on, such as popcorn, peanuts, raw vegetables, grapes, hot dogs, hard candy, etc. Also at one year of age your baby can be weaned from breast milk if you desire and placed on whole milk. Formula fed babies can be changed to whole milk. We recommend limiting milk to two to three eight ounce cups per day. Until age 2 years only use whole milk as the extra fat in the milk is required for proper brain and nervous system growth. For children 2 years and older use skim milk.

Juice

Recent studies show that excessive intake of juice may hinder growth (height) and cause obesity. Fruit juices are also very high in sugar and can cause loose stools. Please refer to the following guidelines regarding juice intake.

Birth to 6 Months: From birth to six months of age your baby does not require juice. If your baby is constipated we may recommend full strength prune or apple juice in small amounts (1 to 2 ounces) until a soft stool is achieved.

Juice (cont.)

6 Months to 1 Year: No juice is preferable or 1-2 ounces per day. Start with milder juices such as apple or white grape juice. Save the citrus juices until after 9 months of age.

1 to 3 Years: No juice is preferable or up to 4 ounces per day.

3 to 3 Years: 4-6 ounces of juice max per day.

Remember that in Arizona it is very hot and dry and your active child should drink water for the thirst and try to minimize excessive use of Kool-Aid, soda pop and Gatorade.

Dental Care

Wiping your baby's teeth with a wet cloth is recommended occasionally throughout the day and at night after the last feeding. After your baby has six to eight teeth start using a soft toothbrush with a pea size amount of children's toothpaste morning and night.

Never put your baby to bed with a bottle as this can cause "baby bottle rot" or cavities of the upper teeth.

Discourage the use of soda, sweet drinks and candy on a regular basis.

At one year of age discard the bottle and only give your child a cup.

Skin Care

Newborn: Until your newborn's belly button falls off, you should not give baby a bath but simply sponge bathe your baby. It is normal for your baby's skin to peel and be dry and lotions and creams are unnecessary in the first one to two months of life. Avoid direct contact with the sun as your newborn's skin is sensitive and will easily burn.

Infants: Under six months of age try to avoid direct sun exposure. If your baby will be in direct sun use a PABA-Free children's sunscreen with an spf of 15 or more. It is unnecessary to spend extra money on sunscreens with spf higher than 15 as these are no more protective than the 15. Limit your infant's time in the sun.

Children: Children love playing outdoors, but in Arizona especially the sun is very strong. Constant reapplying of sunscreen is necessary to protect your child's skin, as well as the use of shade and protective clothing such as hats, sunglasses and t-shirts over swimming suits.