

Feeding Your Baby: Birth to 6 Months

Eating habits that your baby learns are carried into later years. When you let your baby eat when they are hungry and stop when they are full, you are helping them build healthy eating habits. It will help them stay healthy as they grow.



How to know if your baby is hungry or full:

If they are hungry , they might...	If they are full , they might...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to cry after being picked up• Search for the breast• Open their mouth wide when given a bottle or breast• Move their head toward the breast or bottle• Show excitement when offered baby food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spit out nipple when they are full• Stop sucking• Act relaxed or start to fall asleep• Slow down their eating• Close their mouth when given a bottle



Overfeeding is when you feed your baby even when they aren't hungry. **Overfeeding doesn't make your child stronger or healthier.** It can cause your child to become very overweight and other health problems such as diabetes.

When your baby shows signs of being full, stop feeding. **Remember that babies can feel full in as little as 15 to 20 minutes.** Wait until you see signs of your baby being hungry to start feeding again.

When your baby starts to cry, that doesn't always mean they are hungry. Sometimes this just means they want to be cuddled.

Feeding Your Baby: 6 Months to 12 Months

At 6 months...

- **Try introducing baby food.** Feed your baby with a spoon.
- When hungry, your baby might **reach for food**. When full, they might **play with or throw food**.



Between 9 and 12 months...

- Your baby might be able to **hold sippy cup and spoon** by themselves. Babies need a lot of practice to learn these skills. Try letting them hold a spoon to play and learn while you feed them with another spoon.

Things to Avoid:

- **Don't force or hold back food.** Your baby will eat the amount and at the speed that is best for them.
- **Don't feed them when they are fully asleep.** Tickle their cheek or toes to wake very young babies for feeding. By 6 months, there is no need to wake your child for feedings anymore.
- **Only use a spoon to feed them solid foods.** Putting food into a bottle is not safe. Your baby could choke.



Talk to your CHN nutritionist if you have more questions!