

Feeding is a special bonding time for you and your baby. Talk to your baby, hold him or her close, and look into his or her eyes. This helps your baby feel secure and loved.



Who can I contact with my breastfeeding questions?

- **CALL:** Your hospital, doctor, midwife, or WIC staff

WASHINGTON WIC BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT:

- **VISIT:** www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/BreastfeedingSupport

LA LECHE LEAGUE 24-HOUR NATIONAL HELPLINE:

- **CALL:** 1-877-452-5324

OFFICE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH:

- **CALL:** 1-800-994-9662 (Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST) to talk to a trained breastfeeding peer counselor in English or Spanish
- **VISIT:** <https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/>

WASHINGTON POISON CENTER:

- **CALL:** 1-800-222-1222 for free and confidential advice about medications and breastfeeding

FOR HELP FINDING NUTRITION RESOURCES OR TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR WIC OR THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP), CALL:

WithinReach

Call the WithinReach Help Me Grow Washington Hotline at **1-800-322-2588** (711 TTY relay) or **www.ParentHelp123.org**



Child Profile is a program of the Washington State Department of Health.

 Follow us on Facebook @WatchMeGrowWA
 Visit: www.watchmegrowwa.org

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If you have a disability and need this document in a different format, please call 1-800-322-2588 (711 TTY relay).

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Feeding Your Baby

✱ BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS





Trust your baby to let you know when he or she is hungry and when he or she has had enough to eat.

What do I feed my baby for the first six months? ○ ○ ○

Breastmilk is the only food your baby needs for the first six months.

It's the healthiest food for your baby. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding for at least the first year of life. Your breastmilk changes as your baby grows, so it always provides the perfect amount of nutrition. While breastfeeding, ask your doctor if your baby needs an iron or vitamin D supplement. For babies who don't breastfeed or get breastmilk, use infant formula with iron.

Watch your baby's cues to learn how much he or she needs to eat.

How do I know when my baby is hungry or full? * * *

Your baby will help you figure out how much he or she needs to eat. As you get to know your baby, you'll recognize these cues and be able to respond to his or her needs.

Your baby is hungry when he or she:

- Keeps hands near his or her mouth or sucks on his or her hands.
- Licks his or her lips and sticks tongue in and out.
- Puts his or her hands in a fist.
- Makes rapid eye movement beneath closed eyelids.
- Puckers or smacks lips.
- Leans head toward your breast, arm, or bottle (roots).
- Seems fussy or unhappy.
- Cries (this is a late sign of hunger).

Your baby is full when he or she:

- Stops sucking and closes his or her lips.
- Turns his or her head away from your breast or bottle.
- Pushes away.
- Falls asleep.
- Relaxes his or her body and opens his or her hands.

Breastfeeding offers healthy benefits for you and your baby! △ △ △

Your breastmilk has the right ingredients in the right amounts to give your baby the healthiest start in life. Breastfeeding is good for you, too. Moms who breastfeed say:

"Breastfeeding helps me feel closer to my baby."

"I save time because I don't have to mix formula or clean bottles."

"Nighttime feedings are easier."

Breastfeeding protects your baby's health. Breastfed babies are at lower risk of:

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Illnesses, such as colds and ear infections.
- Allergies.
- Obesity.
- Diarrhea and constipation.

Breastfeeding is good for moms, too. It helps you:

- Recover from pregnancy quicker.
- Lower your risk of breast and other cancers.
- Reduce your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
- Reduce your risk of developing postpartum depression.





How much do I feed my baby? ○ ○ ○

Your baby’s tummy is small, so he or she needs to eat often. During growth spurts, your baby will give you cues that he or she wants to eat more. Your baby may want to eat more often or nurse longer. The more you breastfeed, the more milk your body makes. Formula-fed babies may drink one or two more ounces than usual during a feeding or may want to eat more often.

Feeding Recommendations:

Birth to four months:

Feed your baby whenever he or she gives you signs of hunger. Your baby will want to eat 8 to 12 times in 24 hours. His or her tummy is small. Watch for feeding cues to let you know when he or she is full. See the inside of this brochure for examples.

Four to six months:

Feed your baby whenever he or she gives you signs of hunger. Your baby will want to eat 6 to 8 times in 24 hours. His or her tummy can hold about two to three ounces at a time.



Tips to successfully breastfeed after you go back to work or school * * *

If your baby goes to child care, ask his or her child care provider how they support you breastfeeding or pumping on site. Share information with them about how to handle your pumped breastmilk.

- Find out if your workplace has an infant at work program that allows you to bring your baby with you to work. Have a backup plan if they don’t have one.
- Get a breast pump. Some health insurance programs or employers provide breast pumps and other breastfeeding support. If you’re on the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program, ask about getting a breast pump and other breastfeeding support.
- Ask your boss, school staff, or human resources department where you can pump. By law, you must be offered a private place with electricity, that’s not a bathroom, to pump breastmilk for your baby.
- Ask people who will be watching your baby about how they support breastfeeding. Share information about how to handle your pumped breastmilk and ask if moms are welcome to breastfeed on site.

Laws protect a mom’s right to express breastmilk at work and school.

It’s your right to pump milk for your baby. If you pump breastmilk at work or school, remember to refrigerate or chill breastmilk right after you pump. Freshly-pumped milk can be stored in the refrigerator for up to four days or in a covered container at room temperature (up to 77°F or 25°C) for up to four hours, but it is best to chill it as soon as possible.

Store breastmilk safely.

Learn about safe techniques to pump and store breastmilk at https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm.

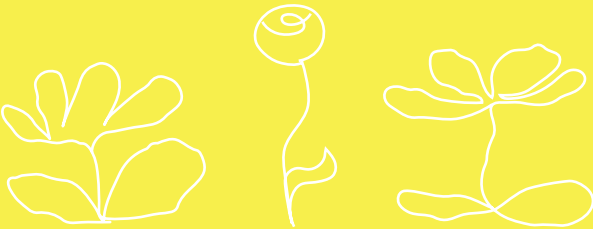
How can I feed my baby when we are out and about? △ △ △

Washington State law protects your right to breastfeed in public—anywhere and anytime. If you’re at a store or business and want privacy, ask if there’s a mother’s area.

If your baby drinks formula, remember to:

- Bring a bottle with warm water and a separate container with pre-measured formula for easy mixing.
- Hold your baby when you feed him or her and make eye contact.
- Use slow-paced feeding by holding the bottle horizontally and allowing the milk to slowly flow into the nipple. Allow your baby to swallow, breathe, and take breaks according to his or her feeding cues. Do not tip the bottle so that the milk is continually flowing into your baby’s mouth. This may cause your baby to be overfed and force him or her to keep drinking in order to breathe.
- Hold the bottle for your baby. Don’t prop the bottle in your baby’s mouth or let your baby bottle-feed on his or her own. Your baby may choke or get ear infections.

Learn more about your rights and find information about pumping breastmilk at <https://bit.ly/3cj2mDR>.



When is my baby ready for solid foods? ● ● ●

Talk to your doctor about when your baby might be ready for solid foods.

Babies start to eat solid foods when they are developmentally ready at about six months old. Starting solid foods too early can cause constipation, choking, obesity, and other health problems. Watch for the following signs and cues that your baby is developmentally ready to eat solid foods.

He or she will:

- Sit with support.
- Hold his or her head up and steady.
- Open his or her mouth for food.
- Swallow food from a spoon.

As you start feeding your baby solid food, remember most of his or her nutrition should still come from breastmilk or formula. Breastmilk meets most of your baby’s nutritional needs until he or she is about six months old.

How do I start introducing solid foods? ★ ★ ★

Give your baby all the breastmilk or formula he or she wants before giving your baby solid foods. Two or three times a day, try mixing one teaspoon of baby cereal with two tablespoons of breastmilk or infant formula. Make the mixture thin at first so your baby can learn to eat it easily. As your baby learns to eat from a spoon, you can make it a little thicker.

Introduce one new food at a time.

Wait five days before offering another new food. This helps you see if your baby has an allergic reaction to a certain food. An allergic reaction can be a rash, vomiting, or diarrhea. If your baby has an allergic reaction call his or her doctor or nurse.

