

Parents are cautioned to avoid reliance on foods and supplements marketed as iron- or vitamin-fortified as primary sources of minerals. Instead, encourage parents to offer the child a variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, including those known to naturally be rich in iron.

## **Introduction of Solid Foods**

When the spoon is first introduced, infants often push it away and appear dissatisfied. Food that is placed on the front of the tongue and pushed out is simply scooped up and refed. As infants become accustomed to the spoon, they will more eagerly accept the food and eventually open the mouth in anticipation (or keep it closed in dislike).

One food item is introduced at intervals of 4 to 7 days to allow for identification of food allergies. New foods are fed in small amounts. As the amount of solid food increases, the quantity of milk is decreased to less than 1 L/day to prevent overfeeding.

Because feeding is a learning process, as well as a means of nutrition, new foods are given alone to allow the child to learn new tastes and textures. Food should not be mixed in the bottle and fed through a nipple with a large hole. This deprives the child of the pleasure of learning new tastes and developing a discriminating palate. It can also cause problems with poor chewing of food later in life because of lack of experience. Guidelines for the introduction of new foods are given in the [Family-Centered Care](#) box.

## **Family-Centered Care**

### **Feeding During the First Year**

#### **Birth to 6 Months Old (Breastfeeding or Bottle Feeding)**

##### **Breastfeeding**

- Most desirable complete diet for the first half of the first year.\*
- A recommended supplement is oral vitamin D (400 IU/day).
- In exclusively breastfed infants 4 months old and older,