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## Infant and Newborn Nutrition

Food provides the energy and nutrients that babies need to be healthy. For a baby, **breast milk** [<https://medlineplus.gov/breastfeeding.html>] is best. It has all the necessary vitamins and minerals. Infant formulas are available for babies whose mothers are not able to or decide not to breastfeed.

Infants are usually ready to eat solid foods at about 6 months of age. Check with your health care provider for the best time for your baby to start. If you introduce one new food at a time, you will be able to identify any foods that cause **allergies** [<https://medlineplus.gov/foodallergy.html>] in your baby. Allergic reactions include a **rash** [<https://medlineplus.gov/rashes.html>] , **diarrhea** [<https://medlineplus.gov/diarrhea.html>] , or **vomiting** [<https://medlineplus.gov/nauseaandvomiting.html>] .

Many parents are concerned about peanut allergies. When babies can eat foods that contain peanuts depends on their risk of food allergies:

- Most babies can have peanut products when they are about 6 months of age
- Babies who have mild to moderate **eczema** [<https://medlineplus.gov/eczema.html>] have a higher risk of food allergies. They usually can eat peanut products at about 6 months of age. If you have concerns about this, check with your baby's health care provider.
- Babies who have severe eczema or egg allergies are at high risk for peanut allergies. If your baby is at high risk, check with your baby's health care provider. Your baby may need allergy testing. Your baby's provider can also recommend when and how to give your baby peanut products.

There are some foods that you should avoid feeding your baby:

- Do not give your baby honey before 1 year of age. Honey may contain bacteria that can cause **botulism** [<https://medlineplus.gov/botulism.html>] in babies.
- Avoid cow's milk before age 1, since it does not have all of the nutrients that babies need and babies cannot digest it
- Unpasteurized drinks or foods (such as juices, milks, yogurt, or cheeses) may put your child at risk for an **E. coli** infection [<https://medlineplus.gov/ecoliinfections.html>] . E. coli is a harmful bacteria that can cause severe diarrhea.
- Certain foods that can cause **choking** [<https://medlineplus.gov/choking.html>] , such as hard candy, popcorn, whole nuts, and grapes (unless they are cut into small pieces). Don't give your child these foods before age 3.
- Because it contains a lot of sugar, babies should not drink juice before age 1

## Start Here

- Feeding Your Newborn [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/feednewborn.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/feednewborn.html>]
- MyPlate Nutrition Nutrition for Infants [<https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages/infants>] (Department of Agriculture)
- Once Baby Arrives [<https://www.fda.gov/food/people-risk-foodborne-illness/once-baby-arrives-food-safety-moms-be>]  
(Food and Drug Administration)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fda.gov/food/people-risk-foodborne-illness/cuando-llega-el-bebe>]

## Related Issues

- Community Water Fluoridation Frequently Asked Questions [<https://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/faq/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Milk Allergy in Infants [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/milk-allergy.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/milk-allergy.html>]
- Stopping the Bottle [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/no-bottles.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/no-bottles.html>]

## Specifics

- Colostrum: Your Baby's First Meal [<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/pages/Colostrum-Your-Babys-First-Meal.aspx>] (American Academy of Pediatrics)  
Also in Spanish [<https://www.healthychildren.org/spanish/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/paginas/colostrum-your-babys-first-meal.aspx>]
- Cronobacter Sakazakii [<https://www.fda.gov/food/foodborne-pathogens/cronobacter-sakazakii>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- FDA Investigation of Cronobacter Infections: Powdered Infant Formula (February 2022) [<https://www.fda.gov/food/outbreaks-foodborne-illness/fda-investigation-cronobacter-infections-powdered-infant-formula-february-2022>] (Food and Drug Administration)
- Formula Feeding FAQs: Preparation and Storage [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/formulafeed-storing.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/formulafeed-storing.html>]
- Is Homemade Baby Formula Safe? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/homemade-formula.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/homemade-formula.html>]
- What Can Parents Do about Heavy Metals in Baby Food? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/heavy-metals.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/heavy-metals.html>]
- What's Best for Your Baby to Drink? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/babies-drink.html>] (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/babies-drink.html>]

## Videos and Tutorials

- How to Bottle-Feed Your Baby [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/bottle-feed-video.html>]  (Nemours Foundation)  
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/bottle-feed-video.html>]

## Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Infant Formula [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=infant+AND+formula&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Infant Nutrition [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=infant+AND+nutrition&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Infant Nutrition Disorders [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22nutrition+disorders%22+AND+infant&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

## Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: The Regulation of Energy Intake in Infancy: A Narrative Review. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40707829>]
- Article: Effect of behavioural change communication through women development army on optimal... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40684168>]
- Article: LC-Orbitrap-MS/MS Analysis of Chosen Glycation Products in Infant Formulas. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40649270>]

• Infant and Newborn Nutrition -- see more articles [

## Find an Expert

- Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/>]   
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.nichd.nih.gov/>]
- Food and Nutrition Service Programs Contacts by State [<https://www.fns.usda.gov/contacts/contact-map>] (Food and Nutrition Service)
- KidsHealth [<https://kidshealth.org/>] (Nemours Foundation)

## Patient Handouts

- Breastfeeding vs. formula feeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000803.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000803.htm>]
- Cow's milk - infants [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002448.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002448.htm>]
- Feeding patterns and diet - babies and infants [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000712.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000712.htm>]
- Feeding patterns and diet - children 6 months to 2 years [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000713.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000713.htm>]
- Infant botulism [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001384.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001384.htm>]
- Neonatal weight gain and nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007302.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)  
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007302.htm>]



## MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Breastfeeding vs. formula feeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000803.htm>]

Cow's milk - infants [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002448.htm>]

Feeding patterns and diet - babies and infants [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000712.htm>]

Feeding patterns and diet - children 6 months to 2 years [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000713.htm>]

How to save money on infant formula [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000805.htm>]

Infant botulism [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001384.htm>]

Infant Formula - buying, preparing, storing, and feeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000806.htm>]

Infant formulas [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002447.htm>]

Neonatal weight gain and nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007302.htm>]

## Related Health Topics

Breastfeeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/breastfeeding.html>]

Child Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/childnutrition.html>]

Food Allergy [<https://medlineplus.gov/foodallergy.html>]

Infant and Newborn Care [<https://medlineplus.gov/infantandnewborncare.html>]

Toddler Nutrition [<https://medlineplus.gov/toddernutrition.html>]

## National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Infant and Newborn Nutrition* is the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development [<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/Pages/index.aspx>]

## Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English

[<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/infantandnewbornnutrition.html>] on *Infant and Newborn Nutrition*

## NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

Healthy Habits That Last a Lifetime: How To Practice Responsive Feeding

[<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/healthy-habits-that-last-a-lifetime-how-to-practice-responsive-feeding>]

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