



# Nourishing the Older Infant: Four to Twelve Months

**B**reast milk or iron-fortified formula is baby's most important food in the first year, and should be baby's only food the first four to six months.

## Introducing Solid Foods

- ☛ Use a spoon to introduce solid foods to baby.
- ☛ Do not put food in the bottle or infant feeder.
- ☛ Measure one teaspoon dry iron-fortified cereal and mix with about two tablespoons breast milk or formula (cereal should be runny). Gradually thicken the cereal as baby gets used to eating solid foods.
- ☛ The next foods to feed baby are mild-flavored vegetables. After vegetables, try mild, non-citrus fruits. If you give a baby the naturally sweet fruits before vegetables, it may be harder to get him to eat the vegetables.
- ☛ Start only one new food at a time. Wait about a week between each new food. At first, feed only one to two teaspoons of each new food.
- ☛ Don't feed the baby foods that are high in sugar, fat or salt.

- ☛ As baby gets older, he will be interested in finger foods such as slices of mild cheese, cooked vegetables, banana slices or plain crackers. Avoid foods such as raw vegetables, hot dogs, popcorn, nuts, grapes, raisins, whole kernel corn and hard candies as they can cause choking.
- ☛ Don't force the baby to eat. His appetite and needs can vary.

## Weaning

- ☛ Start giving small amounts of liquid in a cup to the baby when he is between six and eight months old. A cup with a sipper cap may be helpful. Stop giving bottles around 12 months of age. Always give liquids by a cup. It is easier to wean directly from breast to cup (without introducing a bottle at all) unless baby is too young to get enough milk from the cup only.

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