

# Guide to Baby Feeding

from around

## 6-7 months

Breast milk is the perfect food for your baby. Breast milk or infant formula is all your baby needs for around the first 6 months.

**Stage 1**  
around **6**  
months  
but not before  
4 months

Offer milk **BEFORE** solids. Breast milk or formula is the most important food.

**Signs baby is ready for first foods. Your baby:**

- is holding their head up well.
- is interested in watching you eat.
- still seems hungry after a milk feed.
- opens their mouth when food /spoon approaches.
- their tongue doesn't push food out of their mouth.

Every baby is different and some will be ready for solids earlier than others. Introduce solids around 6 months (but not before 4 months).

**Feeding tips:**

Start by offering a small amount of food after a milk feed, just ½-2 tsps.

Begin with one small meal a day and slowly increase the amount of food you offer.

Offer one new food every 2-4 days. Choose suitable stage 1 foods from the carrot guide.

Once a new food is introduced, you can mix it with other foods your baby has already tried.

**Texture of first foods:**

Smooth, runny or puréed.



Iron fortified baby rice cereal is a great first food. Mix with breast milk or formula until smooth.

**Examples of Stage 1 Foods**

- Iron fortified baby rice cereal
- Cooked puréed veggies e.g carrot, pumpkin, kumara, potato, cassava, kamokamo, taro
- Cooked puréed fruit e.g. apple, pear, apricot, peach
- Smoothly mashed banana, avocado
- Cooked puréed meat, chicken, fish
- Cooked puréed legumes, lentils and rice
- Wattie's blue label cans & pouches

**Stage 2**  
around **7**  
months

Offer milk **BEFORE** solids. Breast milk or formula is still the most important food.

**At this stage your baby may be:**

- starting to sit unsupported.
- learning to chew & bite, and may have teeth.
- leaning towards food or spoon.
- interested in finger foods.
- taking sips of water from a cup.

**Feeding tips:**

Try mixed ingredient foods with a range of tastes.

Introduce new foods suitable for stage 2 (see carrot guide).

Baby may eat between 2 Tbsps and ½ cup food at each meal. Every baby's appetite is different.

Offer baby 2 or 3 meals a day.

**Texture of stage 2 foods:**

Thicker purées, small soft lumps and mashed foods.



Increase the variety of foods, in a soft mashed texture. Depending on your baby, consider offering some soft finger foods.

**Examples of Stage 2 Foods**

**ADD TO STAGE 1 FOODS**

- Cooked mashed veggies e.g. broccoli, parsnip, cauliflower, puha
- Cooked egg
- Tofu and tempeh
- Cooked pasta & cut-up plain noodles
- Cheese, yoghurt, cottage cheese
- Iron fortified baby cereals, plain crackers, bread (white or wholemeal)
- Wattie's red label cans & pouches

Ensure infants and children are sitting down and actively supervised when eating and drinking.

## Common questions about feeding your baby

- Q **Which first foods are a good source of iron?**
- A Iron-rich foods include baby cereal, cooked puréed meat, and chicken. Some iron is also found in fish, cooked puréed lentils, dried peas and beans.
- Q **Why are there ingredients in stage 1 & 2 baby foods, which I thought were only suitable for older babies?**
- A Some ingredients in supermarket baby foods (e.g. sweetcorn, spinach or berries) may be given to babies earlier than if made at home, as the commercial cooking and pureeing process ensures these foods are an appropriate texture for babies.

## Did you know?

You don't need to add sugar, salt, butter, cream or margarine to baby food. It may taste bland to adults, but it's appealing to babies. Fast food is often high in salt and fat. While it is a treat for adults, it shouldn't be given to babies and young children.

### Handy Tip

**How to prepare first foods for baby:** 1) Remove skins, seeds, pips, stones and stringy parts from veggies and fruit. 2) Cook until tender in a small amount of water. 3) Purée.

Wattie's baby food recipes are prepared in our specialist baby food facility with carefully selected, quality ingredients. Wattie's baby food has no preservatives, artificial colours or flavours.

For more advice about feeding your baby visit [forbaby.co.nz](http://forbaby.co.nz) or call the Careline on 0800 55 66 66



**forbaby**  
.co.nz

Call PlunketLine on 0800 933 922

Wattie's

# Guide to Baby Feeding

from around

## 8-12 months

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### Stage 3 around 8 months

Milk feeds are still important but offer **AFTER** solids. Baby should still be having breast milk, or around 600mL of formula a day.

#### At this stage your baby may be:

- chewing & biting well.
- eating more independently, but still needing help.
- showing interest in many foods & textures.
- taking swallows of water from a cup.

#### Feeding tips:

Offer more variety of foods in different sizes and textures.

Serve some food as finger food.

Introduce new foods suitable for stage 3 (see carrot guide).

Offer baby 3 meals a day, with 1 or 2 small snacks in-between.

#### Texture of stage 3 foods:

Offer minced, chopped, grated and small soft finger food.



Increase texture of food to more chunky, but still soft.

#### Examples of Stage 3 Foods

##### ADD TO STAGE 1 & 2 FOODS

- Ripe soft fruit: oranges, mandarins, kiwifruit, pineapple, berry fruit e.g. strawberries
- Cooked spinach, silverbeet, bok choy, capsicum, mushroom, eggplant, creamed corn
- Salad vegetables and tomatoes
- Kai moana/seafood
- Smooth nut butters
- Iron fortified infant muesli, porridge, wheat biscuits
- Cooked onion, garlic, ginger
- Small amounts of mild herbs and spices e.g. parsley, basil, mild curry, turmeric, cinnamon
- Wattie's green label jars and pouches

#### Examples of Stage 4 Foods

##### ADD TO STAGE 1, 2 & 3 FOODS

- Family foods
- Honey
- Full-fat cow's milk as a drink
- Wattie's orange label cans and Little Kids meals

### Stage 4 12 months onwards

Full-fat cow's milk can now be introduced as a main milk drink, or continue with breast milk or formula.

#### At this stage your toddler may be:

- feeding themselves with their fingers.
- wanting to use a spoon to feed themselves.
- holding a cup with 2 hands to drink water.
- chewing food well.
- biting through a variety of textures.

#### Feeding tips:

Your toddler is ready for a wider variety of family foods and finger foods.

Some foods will still need to have the texture altered by cooking until soft and cutting up into a suitable size. (Avoid small hard, round, sticky or stringy foods).

Toddler can join in with family mealtimes, and needs 3 meals a day with small snacks in-between.

Offer milk after food or in-between meals, around 500mL a day is enough for most toddlers.

#### Texture of toddler foods:

Increase texture of food to varied and challenging.



Finger foods, cut up pieces of food, soft chunky food, minced, grated foods.

Ensure infants and children are sitting down and actively supervised when eating and drinking. It is important not to add sugar, salt, butter, cream or margarine to baby and toddler food. As fast food is often high in fat, salt and/or sugar, it shouldn't be given to babies and young children.

## Common questions about feeding your baby

### Q How do I know my baby has eaten enough food?

A Healthy babies are good at regulating their food intake so they get just what they need. When your baby has eaten enough they may refuse food, turn their head away from the spoon, cry, or clamp their mouth shut. Never force your baby to eat more than they want. Every baby's appetite is different, and it is important to be responsive to their fullness cues.

### Q Can my baby have lumpy foods if he doesn't have teeth yet?

A Babies don't need teeth to eat soft lumpy food. Their gums are hard and they can 'munch' soft lumps. As baby gets older it's important to offer more lumpy & textured food to assist normal chewing, swallowing and speech development.

### Q What should my baby drink?

A Other than breast milk or infant formula, the best drink for babies is water. Don't offer fruit juice, cordial, soft drinks or flavoured milk as these can be high in sugars. Never give coffee, tea or alcohol as they can harm your baby's health. Never leave baby to suck on a bottle for a long time as the natural sugars in milk can cause tooth decay.

Wattie's and Plunket have been proudly working together to support New Zealand babies for more than 28 years.



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