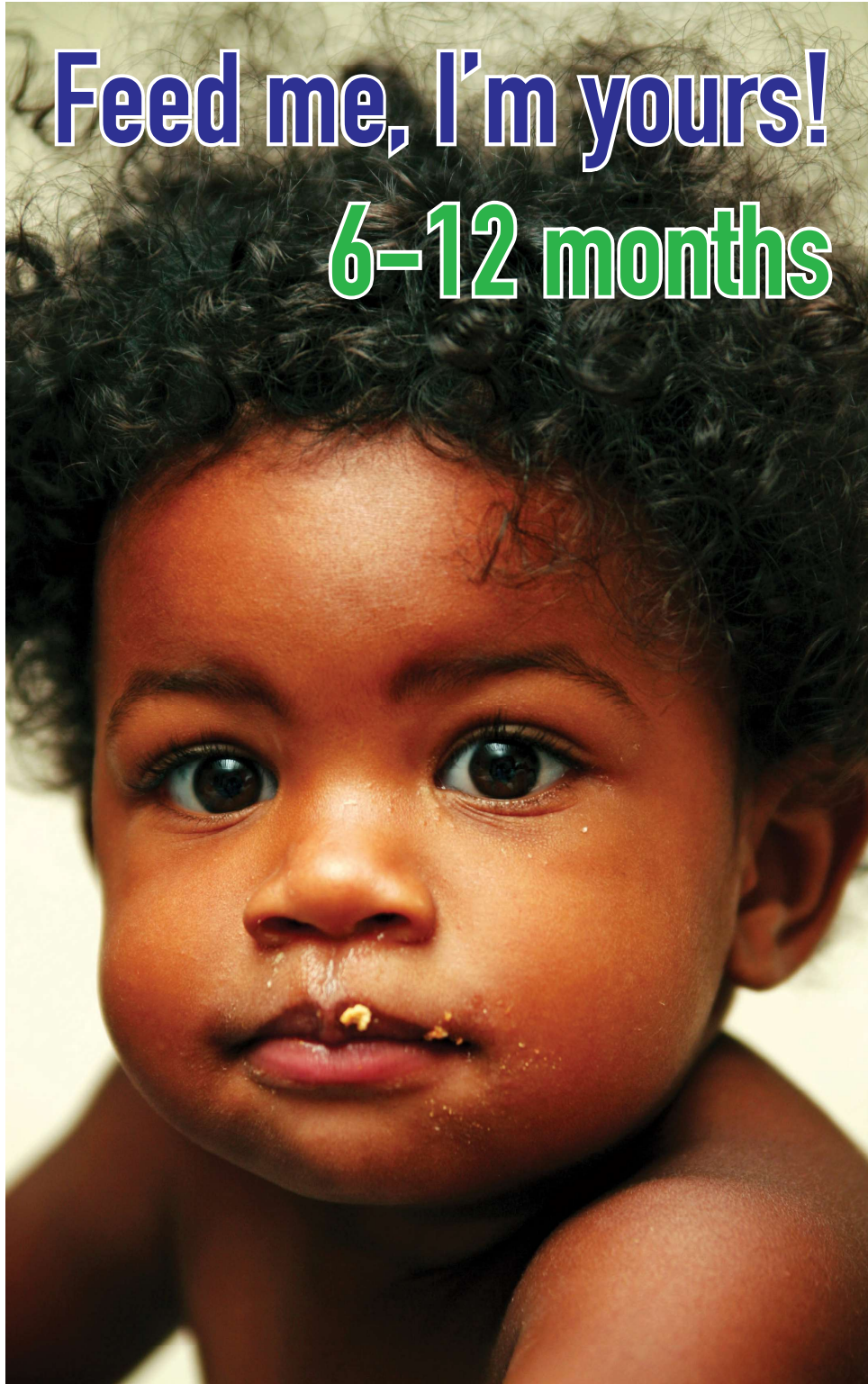


Feed me, I'm yours!
6-12 months



I am ready for solids!

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children be introduced to foods other than breast milk or infant formula at about 6 months old.

I will be ready for solid food when I can...

- Sit up alone or with support
- Can control head and neck
- Open my mouth when food is offered
- Swallow food rather than push it back out
- Bring objects to my mouth
- Try to grasp small objects



If I was born early, I may not be ready to eat solid foods at 6 months. Talk to the WIC provider to assist with assessing readiness for solid foods.

Even though I am starting solids, I still need my mom's milk or formula.

- If I am nursing, you will need to nurse me 6 to 10 times each day
- If I am drinking infant formula, I will need about 4-6 feedings each day with 4-6 ounces at each feeding.
- It is time to start teaching me to drink from a cup. Offer me breastmilk, infant formula, or a small amount of water in a small open cup or straw cup.


Water for Babies

There are many opinions on water consumption for infants and babies. Water should not be offered before 6 months of age. Breastmilk and formula provide all the water the baby needs for the first year. You can introduce water at 6 months, and it should be offered in a cup (never a bottle).

So How Much Water...

Water should be limited to less than 2-4 ounces a day.

If you are concerned about your baby's hydration status, monitor the number of wet diapers and energy level.

6-9 months	Optional
Less than 4 oz. a day	

But What About Juice?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that juice should not be introduced during the first year of life. Juice is not recommended because it adds extra calories without the balanced nutrition that is found in formula and breastmilk.

Instead of juice, offer a pureed whole fruit or blend fruit and ice and serve as a smoothie. Don't forget to offer it to me in a straw cup.

Now that I'm ready for some food...

- Start Slow. There is no certain order I can try new foods but try one single-ingredient food at a time at first. Wait 3 days between each new food to watch for possible food allergies.
 - ◆ Start with foods that are mashed, pureed, or strained and very smooth in texture. Be sure to watch me while I am eating. I might cough, gag, or spit up.
 - ◆ As I get older, my oral skills will develop, and thicker and lumpier foods can be introduced.
- Introduce potentially allergenic foods when other foods are introduced.
 - ◆ Potentially allergenic foods include cow's milk products, like cheese and yogurt, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soy, and sesame.
 - ◆ I still can't drink cow's milk or fortified soy beverages, but yogurt is okay.
- If you give me infant cereal, it is important to try different fortified infant cereals, like oat, barley, and multi-grain, not just rice cereal.
- Please be patient with me! I will probably refuse new foods the first few times and make BIG messes! Just keep trying. I am new to taste, textures, and smells. I just need to practice with lots of different taste, smells, and textures.



I am ready to explore new foods.

Cereal and purees sure are yummy, but I am ready to try something new! As I start to take more solid foods, I still need my mom's milk or infant formula.

- I am now very good at nursing, so I may finish quickly and nurse fewer times per day (about 4 to 6 times each day).
- If I am drinking formula, I will probably drink about 24-32 ounces each day.

As for foods...

- Cut soft food into small pieces or thin slices.
- Remove seeds and hard pits from fruit, and then cut the fruit into small pieces.
- Cut cylindrical foods like sausage, cucumber, and string cheese into short thin strips, instead of round pieces.
- Cut small spherical foods like grapes, cherries, berries, and tomatoes into small pieces.



Appropriately Cut Foods:

<https://www.yummytoddlerfood.com/finger-foods-for-baby/>

<https://www.yummytoddlerfood.com/how-to-cut-food-for-toddlers/>

You can offer me...

- Cut soft food into small pieces or thin slices.
- Small pieces of soft, cooked, peeled fruits and vegetables
- Toasted bread squares, unsalted crackers, or small pieces of soft tortilla
- Mixed grain cereal
- Fruits and cooked vegetables, mashed with a fork
- Cooked plain rice and noodles, mashed or chopped
- Small pieces of cooked ground meat or chicken; remove all bones and tough parts

More Feeding Information

1. Follow "Use By" dates for buying and storing unopened baby food.
2. Check the vacuum seal on baby food jars. The button on the lid should be depressed (not popped out). Also, listen for the jar lid to pop or click when you open the jar. Don't buy or use jar if the vacuum seal is broken.
3. Feed your baby from a small dish, not the jar. The jar should be refrigerated after opening and used within 2 days.
4. Feed purees or cereal with a small spoon. Do not add to a bottle or use an infant feeder.
5. Throw away uneaten food in the dish after each feeding.
6. Watch your baby for signs of food allergies. Common signs include:
 - Rashes or hives
 - Itching
 - Repetitive vomiting

If your baby has any of the following reactions, see a doctor immediately.
These are signs of severe allergic reaction.

- Difficulty breathing
- Baby's lips or tongue may swell

Hunger Cues: 6+ months

May be Hungry when:	May be Full when:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reaches for or points to food• Opens mouth when offered a spoon of food• Gets excited when seeing food• Uses hand motions or makes sounds to let you know I'm still hungry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pushes food away• Closes my mouth when food is offered• Turns head away from food• Uses hand motions or makes sounds to let you know I'm full

Remember...

- Do not add sugar or salt to my food. Feed me during scheduled mealtimes to establish a routine. Do not force or bribe me to eat. You decide what I eat. I decide whether to eat and how much I eat.

Smart Tips for Feeding Your Baby

1. Start letting your baby sit at the table with the family.
2. It's ok to let your baby practice feeding herself with her fingers or with a spoon. It will get messy, but she needs the practice to learn how to eat.
3. Always sit with your baby. Watch him feed himself. He cannot make noise if he starts to choke.
4. Keep giving your baby new foods to try so she will like a variety. If she refuses a food, keep trying! She might need to try a new food about 10 times or more before she decides she likes it.
5. Try to variety of textures of foods. If he refuses a food, it may not be because of the taste. It could possibly be the texture. If he refuses mashed potatoes, he may like hashbrown.

I'm growing up.


It's hard to believe, but I am growing up. I'm about 9–12 months old now, and I'm really getting the hang of eating and drinking. I am now able to:

- Chew and swallow soft, mashed, and chopped foods
- Use a small open cup or a straw cup
- Start to use a spoon

As I begin to eat more solid foods and drink from a cup, I can be weaned from the bottle.

- If I am nursing, I will continue to nurse 4 to 6 times each day.
- If I drink infant formula, I will drink about 24–32 ounces each day. Offer me formula in a cup more often than in a bottle.

So How Much Water...

9-12 months	Optional
Less than 8 oz. a day	

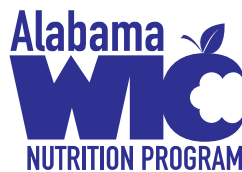
Remember...

There are so many great foods I can eat! Offer me small pieces of cooked or soft foods that the family eats:

- Cereals, breads, crackers,
- Fruits and cooked vegetables
- Cooked soft meats
- Cooked beans and lentils
- Casseroles

Smart Tips for Feeding Your Baby

- Continue to let your baby feed himself.
- Cut food appropriately so that baby does not choke. Remember to cut cylindrical foods into short thin strips and small spherical foods into small pieces.
- Avoid foods that can cause your baby to choke like popcorn, hard candy, and nuts.



For more information about WIC, please visit our website:

www.alabamapublichealth.gov



The Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children
from The Alabama Department of Public Health

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