



# Get To Know Your New Baby

WIC's guide for

4 to 7 Months

WIC helps you make amazing kids!

## Exciting Times!

What a fun time  
in your baby's life!

Suddenly your baby  
has a personality and  
is doing new things!

This booklet will  
help you know  
what to expect  
and when to start  
offering solid food.



# Feeding

Big things happen with feeding at this age!  
Learn all about those first bites here.

## Quiz PAGE 4

Is your baby ready to start solids?  
Take the quiz and find out.

## Making Baby Food PAGE 8

Making baby food is easier than you might  
think. Learn how in three simple steps.

## Starting a Cup PAGE 9

Your baby will drink from a cup in no time.  
Learn how to get started.

## Your Active Baby PAGE 10

Read about all the exciting things your baby will  
do and how you can encourage him along the way.



# Feeding

This guide begins at 4 months of age to help you prepare, but most babies are not ready to eat solid foods until they are around 6 months old.

Exclusive breastfeeding (breastmilk only) is the best way to feed your baby for the first six months.



## Is My Baby Ready For Solid Foods?

Take this quiz to find out!

start here

**1** My baby is around 6 months of age.

- True  False

**2** When I sit my baby up, he:

- A. Leans or falls to the side.  
 B. Can sit with no trouble.  
 C. Needs me to help after a minute or two.

**3** My baby holds his head up steady and straight.

- True  False


**4** When I'm eating, my baby:

- A. Is not interested.  
 B. Is more interested in what I'm doing than in what food I have.  
 C. Leans toward my plate, follows my spoon with his eyes and opens his mouth.

**5** When I offer food from a spoon, my baby:

- A. Closes his lips over the spoon and pulls the food off as I pull the spoon from his mouth.  
 B. Pushes it back out onto his chin with his tongue.  
 C. Gags or coughs.

Check your answers on the next page. →



**Yes,**  
he's ready for  
solids if you  
answered:

check  
your  
answers  
here

- 1 True** - The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends babies begin trying solid foods around 6 months of age.
- 2 B or C** - Before starting solids, your baby should be able to sit up alone or with some help.
- 3 True** - Your baby needs to be able to hold his head up steady and straight to make eating solids safe and easy.
- 4 C** - Your baby will become very interested in the foods you eat and how you eat them.
- 5 A** - Your baby should be able to close his lips over a spoon, keep the food in his mouth, and swallow without gagging, coughing or choking.

**If any of your answers don't match,** wait to introduce solid food until your baby is ready.



# Starting Baby Food

Wow, your baby is ready for solids now!

## Which Food Do I Offer First?

### First Bites

Babies can start with any puréed food, such as meats, infant cereal, vegetables or fruits.

Meats and infant cereals are the best first food for exclusively breastfed infants.

They are high in iron and zinc, which babies need more of beginning around 6 months.

Try barley, oatmeal, and whole wheat infant cereals.

Baby food is “puréed” when foods have been softened, crushed or blended into a paste or liquid.



### Feeding Tips

- 1 Feed breastmilk or formula first. It helps if he's not very hungry when you offer new foods.
- 2 Start with one feeding a day of one or two teaspoons of a new food.
- 3 Wait 3 - 5 days between new foods to look for allergic reactions especially if there's a family history.
- 4 Let him guide you on how much food to give him.
- 5 Keep trying. It's okay if he doesn't like a food on the first try.

Breastmilk or formula is still the most important food for your baby until he turns 1.



## Sample Menu

Once your baby is up to two meals a day and he has tried several new foods, a sample menu might look like this:

### Morning

- 6-8 ounces of breastmilk or formula and
- 1 teaspoon to 4 tablespoons of infant cereal or meats and
- 1 teaspoon to 2 tablespoons of fruit

### Afternoon or Evening

- 6-8 ounces of breastmilk or formula and
- 1 teaspoon to 4 tablespoons of infant cereal or meats and
- 1 teaspoon to 2 tablespoons of vegetables



### Hunger Cues

- ▶ Reaches or points to food
- ▶ Opens his mouth when offered food
- ▶ Gets excited when he sees food
- ▶ Uses hand motions or sounds to let you know he is still hungry



### Fullness Cues

- ▶ Pushes food away
- ▶ Closes his mouth when food is offered
- ▶ Uses hand motions or sounds to let you know he is full

# Making Baby Food

Making baby food at home is a great way to introduce him to foods your family already likes to eat. Here's how:

## You May Need:

- ▶ Sharp knife
- ▶ Saucepan
- ▶ Large bowl
- ▶ Blender
- ▶ Fork or masher
- ▶ Storage containers

## Reminders:

- ▶ Don't add sugar or salt. Fruits and vegetables are naturally flavorful.
- ▶ Always test food temperature before serving.

## 1. Prep



- Wash hands, tools and surfaces with soap and hot water.
- Scrub and peel fruits or vegetables, remove pits and seeds, and chop into large pieces.

## 2. Cook



- Fruits and vegetables: boil or steam until tender.
- Meat: cook with broth at 375 degrees until done.
- Allow cooked food to cool.

## 3. Purée



Skip this step if he can chew soft foods.

- Mash pieces with a fork.
- Use breastmilk, formula, water or broth to thin as needed and mix until smooth.

## More Tips

### Your Baby Will

**Start**  
with thinner  
purées



**Move**  
to chunkier  
texture



**Advance**  
to soft  
finger foods

## Storing Food



Pour purées into ice cube trays or other small storage containers and freeze.

## Reheating Food



Use a stove or microwave to thaw.

Only warm the amount you will feed him since it's already been cooked.



# Starting A Cup



**Introduce a cup  
when your baby  
starts solid foods.**

Start by letting him play with an empty cup.

Offer 4-8 ounces of water a day from cups during meals and snack time.

He will be messy and spill often, but be patient. He will learn with time.

Once he gets used to water in a cup, begin offering small amounts of breastmilk or formula.

## What Drinks Can I Put In My Baby's Cup?

You can put small amounts of water, breastmilk or formula when you offer your baby the cup at meal and snack times.

Babies do not need juice or any other sweetened drinks.

Juice and sweetened drinks (like sports drinks and punch) have a lot of sugar and can leave your baby too full to eat other healthier foods.



# Your Active Baby

## How Active Should My Baby Be?

As he gets older, he will listen to you and understand a lot of what you say.

He will want to sit up, hold and drink from a cup and start to crawl.

It's such an exciting time!

### I like to play and learn by:

- ▶ Rolling over.
- ▶ Playing peek-a-boo and patty cake with you.
- ▶ Grabbing things and putting them in my mouth. If you put it near me, I will grab it!
- ▶ Shaking things to hear sounds they make.
- ▶ Babbling and trying to repeat sounds.

### Ways you can help me feel safe and get stronger:

- ▶ Come to me quickly when I cry. This helps me learn to trust.
- ▶ Hold me often and cuddle me!
- ▶ Lay me on my back and gently pull my arms toward you so I can sit.
- ▶ Hold me and let me push my feet against your hands.
- ▶ Give me “tummy time” so I can practice lifting my head and shoulders.
- ▶ Put little things I could choke on or break out of reach.

The more you know about how babies grow and change, the less you'll worry.

Limit the amount of time your baby spends in chairs and swings.

Babies need space to move, explore and develop their muscles.

## 6 to 7 Months

I like to play and learn by:

- ▶ Crawling over you as you sit on the floor.
- ▶ Putting everything in my mouth.  
Please make sure my toys are clean!
- ▶ Repeating sounds I hear.
- ▶ Moving my toys from one hand to the other.

Ways you can help me feel safe and get stronger:

- ▶ Hold me often. I am never too old for that!
- ▶ Comfort me when I cry. I am upset when you leave and so glad when you return!
- ▶ Include me in whatever you are doing.
- ▶ Praise me when I do something new.  
I love getting praise!



# Hooray!



Parents say  
their greatest  
joy comes from  
watching their  
babies grow.

You've helped  
your baby  
do so much.

He's learned  
how to sit up,  
drink from a cup  
and eat new foods.

There's so much  
to teach your baby.  
Stick with WIC  
until your baby  
is 5 years old  
and you will  
learn even more.

Find out how WIC can  
help you make amazing kids.

Visit [TexasWIC.org](http://TexasWIC.org)  
to learn more and find your  
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