

IS YOUR BABY READY FOR MORE VARIETY?

A close-up photograph of a baby with dark hair, wearing a yellow bib with an orange trim, sitting in a high chair with a red and white striped backrest. The baby is looking to the right with an open mouth, and a spoon with orange food is being fed into it. The background is a bright, out-of-focus outdoor scene with green foliage.

Between 6-8 months, your baby may
be ready for more tastes and textures!

Variety—the spice of life!

How to start?

For your baby, everything is a curiosity and a new experience, and food is quickly becoming her number one interest! She watches you eat. She reaches out for a cup or spoon. She uses her fingers to pick up objects. These are all signs that she may be ready for thicker foods. The following questions and answers may help you learn more about when and how to introduce different textures and foods to your baby.

How can I get my baby to eat a variety of foods?

It takes some babies time to learn to love different foods—but that love starts now! Here's how to teach your baby to enjoy them: Offer him tastes of a pureed or mashed food. If he doesn't like it, try it again over the next few days, or try mixing it with something he does like. If he still doesn't seem to like it, offer a favorite food, and try the new food again the next day. Be patient and keep doing that for at least 10 days—it can take 10-15 tries before he'll eat it!

Let your baby decide what she likes and dislikes.

Everyone has different tastes. Don't let your personal food preferences decide what you give your baby.

What about fruit juice?

Babies don't need fruit juice. Juice can lead to an upset stomach, gas or diarrhea. Fruit, complete with fiber and texture, is a much better choice than fruit juice.

Can my baby have the same food our family eats?

Every baby is different and gets used to new textures at their own pace. However, once they've gotten used to pureed foods, most babies can slowly advance to lumpier textures. You can now start to introduce small portions of the family's foods, like mashed soft fruits, cooked vegetables, avocados and beans, and offer them to him on his high-chair tray. He can also practice using a cup!

How will I know when my baby is full?

By now, you're familiar with your baby's cry when she's tired, hungry or angry. You will soon know her signs of fullness. She may sit back, turn her head away from food, or push food away. She may slow down her eating or refuse to open her mouth. However she communicates that she's full, respect what she's telling you and follow her cues. Encouraging her to take "just one more bite" is not a good idea and can lead to overeating, overweight and obesity.

Have fun!

Eat with your baby and make feeding time enjoyable and relaxed. Expect things to be messy—it's all part of the fun!

sample meals

Morning

- 2 Tablespoons prepared infant cereal
- 2 Tablespoons pureed or mashed fruit

Afternoon

- 2 Tablespoons pureed or mashed vegetables

Evening

- 2 Tablespoons pureed or mashed vegetables or fruit
- 2 Tablespoons pureed or mashed meat

Six- to eight-month-olds still rely mostly on breastmilk or formula to grow and develop. At this age, breastfed babies usually nurse six or more times a day. Formula-fed babies drink about 21-30 ounces a day.