



University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service

## FEEDING THE HEALTHY INFANT

To grow, a baby needs good nutrition and proper feeding. Here are some tips to help you feed the infant in your family:



- ✓ Breast milk and formula until age one.
- ✓ Breastfeeding is best! Breast milk has nutrients not found in cow's milk.
- ✓ Breast milk can be pumped into a bottle for later feeding.
- ✓ Water should not be offered to infants younger than six months
- ✓ Never give a bottle with the infant laying down
- ✓ No solids until 4-6 months of age.

**To prevent tooth decay, don't let an infant sleep with the bottle in its mouth.**

**To make vitamin D, infants need at least 10-15 minutes of sunlight a day.**

**Solid foods are never as nutritious as breast milk or formula. Give plain baby foods not mixed dinners.**

**Don't restrict fat in the diets of infants. No skim or low fat milk until age 2.**

Keep infants upright while feeding to prevent choking, ear infections, and discomfort while eating.



For the first few months, feed infants in a semi-upright position as if they were in a car seat or infant carrier.



Infants eating from a spoon should sit upright in a high chair. The persons offering the food should sit directly in front, making eye contact.

When the healthy infant is ready for solid food (able to sit in a high chair without support):

- ✓ Offer one new food at a time over 2-3 days. Look for signs of allergies.
- ✓ Start with rice cereal.
- ✓ Offer one or two meals per day (1-2 tablespoons per feeding).
- ✓ The infant may cry when hungry or reach for food.
- ✓ When full, the infant will stop eating. **DO NOT FORCE FEED!**

What are some foods that infants eat?

- ✓ Foods that do not require chewing (rice cereal, pureed fruits and vegetables, mashed potatoes)
- ✓ Soft table foods without salt
- ✓ Cheerios
- ✓ Cooked Cream of Wheat



Never feed an infant:

- ✓ popcorn, peanuts, raisins or grapes, uncut stringy meats, honey, gum or gummy candies, hard candy, hot dog pieces, hard raw fruit or vegetables

**All large pieces of food should be cut into small pieces and mashed with a fork to avoid choking.**

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