

EAT  
GROW  
LIVE HEALTHY



BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS

My name is \_\_\_\_\_

I weigh \_\_\_\_\_ and I am \_\_\_\_\_ inches long.

Notes for me and/or my goal:

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# I AM YOUR BABY. YOU WANT THE BEST FOR ME!

## PLEASE HELP ME.

I want to grow strong in body, heart, and mind. I grow best when you:

- Hold and cuddle me.
- Smile and talk to me.
- Listen to me when I “talk” to you with my face and body.

Feed me right...with food and love.

## FEEDING GUIDELINES

Breastmilk is the ideal food for me during the first year of life. Do not feed me anything other than breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula for the first six months.

### BIRTH TO 4 MONTHS

When I am born, my stomach is no bigger than a ping pong ball. It can only hold 2 to 3 ounces at a time. This means I will want to eat frequently, between 8 and 12 times in 24 hours, and sometimes even more.

### 4 TO 6 MONTHS

I will want to eat about 6 to 8 times in 24 hours. My tummy can hold about 4 to 6 ounces at a time.

### » BREASTMILK IS THE PERFECT FOOD FOR ME!

It has just the right amount of nutrients I need. It changes with my appetite and as I grow. It helps you to recover faster from delivery and keeps me from getting sick.

### » RETURNING TO WORK OR SCHOOL?

Many moms continue to breastfeed or pump breastmilk when they return to work or school. Ask your WIC staff for help and more information on the best feeding plan to meet your goals.



### » WATCH ME WHEN I EAT.

I show you I am hungry when I put my hands near my mouth, search for your breast (root), make sucking noises, or pucker my lips.

I show you I am full when I stop sucking and let go of the nipple. I look relaxed or sleepy. Once I get full, I might frown, fuss, and kick if you keep feeding me.

### » I EAT MORE WHEN I HAVE A GROWTH SPURT.

I will want to nurse longer or more often at the breast. Or, I will act hungry after I finish a bottle. If you breastfeed me, your body will make more milk. If I drink all the formula, give me another ounce or two of formula.

### » HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT I'M EATING ENOUGH?

I wet six or more diapers a day and the doctor says I am gaining weight and growing well.

### » KEEP ME SAFE.

- If you use a bottle to feed me, put only pumped breastmilk or formula in it.
- Wash your hands before you feed me or make my food.
- Follow the mixing instructions on the label or as given by your baby's health care provider.
- Never warm my bottle in a microwave. Liquids heat unevenly and I could burn my mouth.
- Use a prepared bottle of formula immediately.
- Throw away any formula left in the bottle one hour after I start feeding. Ask the WIC staff how to safely store breast milk.

## I NEED YOUR TOUCH.

**Hold me when you feed me.** I feel safe in your arms. Hold me skin-to-skin frequently when I am tiny and look at my face and into my eyes. I will learn to look back. I love to look at your face. Talk to me. I will learn to smile and coo.

Sometimes I take a break from eating. I am not full yet. I just want to rest or share some special time with you.

Help me stay awake while you feed me. If I fall asleep with milk in my mouth, I could choke or get an earache.

## WHEN CAN I TRY A NEW FOOD?

I grow best on breastmilk or formula. Do not feed me any food until I am 6 months old. Then, ask my doctor if I am ready to try a new food. I must be able to:

- Sit up and hold my head steady.
- Show I want food by opening my mouth to take it from a spoon.
- Show I do not want food by closing my mouth or turning my head away from you.

## SPIT UP...GAS...DIRTY DIAPERS

Babies must get used to food in their tummies. So, we spit up, get gas, and grunt and turn red when we have a bowel movement. It does not hurt and goes away as we grow.

- Please feed me before I get upset. Look for my signs of hunger such as mouth movements or bringing my hands to my mouth. I spit up less if I am calm when I eat and stop eating when I get full.
- When I am small, I need to be burped after I eat. Wait until I stop eating to burp me. Hold me with my tummy against your chest or lap. Gently pat or rub my back.
- I might have one or more bowel movements a day. Sometimes, I might not have any for a day or two. This is not constipation. Constipation is a hard, dry stool that hurts to pass and makes me cry.





## KEEP ME HEALTHY.

- Don't feed me honey or foods made with honey. I could get serious food poisoning.
- I don't need to drink water or juice. I get all the liquid I need from breastmilk or formula. Please don't give me any sweet drinks or soda.
- Clean my mouth after I eat. Wipe my gums with a clean, wet, soft cloth.

## PLAY WITH ME!

Please don't keep me in a baby carrier or infant seat. Put me on a blanket on the floor. Watch how I stretch and kick my legs and move my arms. I am making them stronger. Stay with me when I play.

Put me on my tummy for play time. I will learn to push myself up with my arms. I will learn to roll over. Remember, if I am tired, please place me on my back to sleep in my crib.

## LOOK WHAT I CAN DO!

I am ready to learn about you, about me, and the world I live in. I learn best when I feel happy, loved, and safe.

### Birth to 3 Months

The world is new to me and I may cry a lot. This is how I tell you that I need you. When you come to me, I will calm down and learn that you care. If you let me cry, I waste energy I need to grow my brain and body. Holding me will not spoil me.

I must learn what day and night are. At first, I sleep 2 to 3 hours, wake up, eat, and go back to sleep again. It might take 3 months or more to learn to sleep through the night. Please be patient as I learn.

I know your voice. I like to watch you and learn what you do. Show things to me and tell me about them.

### 4 to 6 Months

I start to settle into a routine. I can sleep longer at night. I am growing strong and active.

I can hold my head up. I use my hands to pick things up and put them in my mouth. Keep an eye on me so I don't choke. I know my name when you say it. I babble *ba-ba-ba*! I can laugh. Let's play peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake. Please read to me. Show me the pictures and tell me what they are.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

- I need check ups and shots to stay healthy. I should visit the doctor a few days after birth and before one month, then at 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months of age.
- If I am breastfed, ask the doctor if I need a vitamin D supplement.
- Always place me on my back to sleep in a crib or bassinet. Use a firm mattress. Nothing should be in my crib or bassinet but me - no pillows, bumper pads, blankets, toys or positioners. Do not let me sleep on a chair or couch.
- Keep me away from cigarette and other tobacco smoke. Smoke hurts my lungs and can make me sick.
- Never leave me alone at bath time or while changing me.
- It's the law! Buckle me into an infant car seat before we ride in a car. Install my seat in the car's back seat, facing backwards.

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