

## Birth to Six Months

For the first six months of life, infant nutrition is pretty basic. Your baby is designed to suck and swallow. In the early months, your baby has a tongue-thrust reflex that causes the tongue to automatically protrude outward when any foreign object enters her mouth. The tongue-thrust instinct protects her from choking. Before this reflex ends and your baby is able to coordinate tongue and swallowing movements, all of her nutrition should come from breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula.

## Your Supply

When it comes to your milk supply, *the single most important thing that you will need to understand and remember is your milk making system, referred to as **supply and demand***. A full breast that is not being emptied frequently sends a strong message to make less while an empty breast from feeding or pumping frequently sends a strong message to make more. Some women will **overproduce**. That means they make a lot more milk than their baby will ever need to eat. On **the flip side is the challenge of low supply** or not enough milk to meet your baby's needs. This can be caused by *improper latching, infrequent or delayed feedings, or supplementation with formula* that replaces the demand on your breast to make the right amount of milk.

## Breast Pumps

Most moms will choose to use a breast pump to express milk. There are different types of breast pumps available and it's important that you're using one that is appropriate for your pumping needs and how much and often you'll be using it. Look for these features: *a closed hygienic system where no milk can enter the tubing or pump motor, multiple flange sizes that come with the pump or are available for purchase, adjustable speed and suction controls to help stimulate multiple letdowns of milk, and multiple power options such as AC, battery, and car adapters*. Once you have pumped or expressed your milk, you can store it for later that day, that week, or even months.

## Take Care of Yourself

First and foremost, breastfeeding *should not be a painful or unpleasant experience* for you. Do moms feel pain when they nurse? Yes, they do, but it should be addressed and not assumed to be the normal state. When it comes to nipple soreness and pain, it's always easier to try and prevent further issues than treat them later. Proper latch and position on the breast will be your best prevention. Get a completely organic lanolin-free nipple cream, preferably one with Calendula to apply to your nipples in between feedings. *If your nipples are cracked and/or bleeding, seek help from a lactation consultant immediately*. Seek professional help right away if: your breasts are painful, swollen, red, or hot to the touch; you're feeling one or more lumps in the breast that do not go away with breast massage, moist heat, and feeding; pain in your nipple or breast before, during, or after feedings; flu-like symptoms such as chills or fatigue and fever over 101 degrees Fahrenheit. *Breast milk is almost 90% water. Staying hydrated is important and necessary to produce breast milk.*

## Breast Milk or Formula?

Your baby's digestive system is still immature and not ready to handle regular foods. In fact, *the American Academy of Pediatricians (AAP) recommends that breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula be the primary source of nourishment for your baby's first year*. **Breast milk is the best food for your baby**. It contains all

the right ingredients in just the right balance to meet your baby's nutritional needs. Breast milk adjusts with babies' changing needs.

***No commercial formula can be considered a completely satisfactory replacement for breast milk.*** However, formula manufacturers have developed relatively safe and effective alternatives for babies. ***If you choose to formula feed for personal, health, or social reasons, consult your doctor before deciding which formula is best for your baby.*** Iron is necessary for proper brain development and organ functioning. Your baby's stored-up iron is depleted by the sixth month, so an iron-fortified formula is recommended unless your doctor advises otherwise.

### Tips for Preparing Formula

Wash your hands before you begin. Always start with clean bottles and nipples. Clean the lid of the can before you open it. Designate a separate can opener for formula if you use the liquid type. When using powdered formula, follow the directions on the can, and add the water before the formula. If your baby doesn't finish the bottle, throw out what's left. ***Mixed formula should be used immediately or stored in the refrigerator for no more than twenty-four hours.*** Never prop the bottle up when you are not holding your baby. She can choke with no one to assist her. Plus, feeding is an important time to hold your baby, look into her eyes, and bond with her. While you are feeding her, she learns to trust that you are the one who will love her and meet her needs.

### The Formula Choice

***The best thing for your baby is breast milk.*** When this is not possible, a good formula can help a baby grow and thrive. With a little monitoring and knowledge about formula usage, ***your baby can grow up healthy and well-nourished.*** When it comes to feeding your baby, there are plenty of options. You need to choose the best feeding method for ***both you and your baby.***

### SUGGESTED AMOUNTS FOR FORMULA FEEDING

WEIGHT	OUNCES PER DAY
6 pounds	12-15 ounces
7 pounds	14-17.5 ounces
8 pounds	16-20 ounces
9 pounds	18-22.5 ounces
10 pounds	20-25 ounces
11 pounds	22-27.5 ounces
12 pounds	24-30 ounces
13 pounds	26-32.5 ounces
14 pounds	28-35 ounces
15 pounds	30-37.5 ounces

### AVERAGE INFANT GROWTH

Weeks 1-4	4-7 ounces per week
Months 2-6	1-2 pounds per month
Months 6-12	1 pound per month

#### References and Footnotes:

1. Information compiled from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health, Washington, DC found at: <http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeed-ing/> and American Academy of Pediatrics, Elk Grove Village, IL found at: <http://www.aap.org/>, accessed 9-18-2018