

Bottle Feeding Your Baby: Birth to 6 months

Parent's Roles

- **Learn your baby's hunger and fullness signs.**
 - Respond to those signs.
- **Offer your baby breast milk or formula**
 - Breast milk is the best choice for your baby.
 - For babies who are not breastfed, offer store-bought infant formula.
- **Hold your baby while they feed.**
 - Hold your baby close during feeding.
 - Never prop the bottle.

Baby's Roles

- **Decide when to drink.**
 - Show you when they are hungry and when they are full.
- **Decide whether or not to drink.**
 - Decide if they want to take the breast or the bottle, or not.
- **Decide how much to drink.**
 - Drink the amount that is right for them. Baby's appetite can vary from day to day.

Signs your baby is Hungry

- Wriggling arms and legs
- Bringing their hands to their mouth
- Turning toward the person holding them, often with an open mouth.
- Opening their mouth
- Licking their lips or sucking

Crying is a late sign of hunger. For a happy baby, watch your baby and offer the bottle when he shows the early signs of hunger above.

Babies know when they are hungry and how much to eat. When you feed a baby who is hungry, you are helping them to follow their appetite, as well as to grow properly.

Signs your baby is Full

- Sucking and swallowing slows or stops
- Closing mouth
- Pushing or turning away from the bottle
- Falling asleep

Watch your baby while you are feeding them. Stop feeding your baby when they show they are full.

Never force your baby to finish a bottle.





Frequently Asked Questions

Won't it spoil my baby if I let them feed whenever they want and stop whenever they want?

- No, feeding when they want to drink helps them to get all the nutrition they need when they need it. This also helps your baby follow their natural appetite cues and may prevent eating issues later.

I think my baby isn't getting enough milk. I try to get him to drink more by jiggling the bottle. Is this ok?

- No. Stop feeding your baby when they show they are full. Don't jiggle the bottle or force him to take more. Trust your baby. They will drink what they need.
- Watch for your baby's hunger signs to tell you when it's time to feed. Also watch for your baby's fullness signs to know when to stop.
- Follow your baby's appetite to know the number of bottles to prepare and offer. Newborns can drink as little as 30 mL (1 oz.) at a feeding. This will increase as they grow.
- If you are concerned, talk to a registered dietitian who can help you know if your baby is getting enough nutrition to grow well.

My baby seems hungry before the next scheduled feed. Do I need to give them more at each feed?

- Try to feed your baby whenever they show signs of hunger, not based on a schedule. Babies' appetites can vary day to day as they grow.
- Do not add cereal or anything else to your baby's bottle.
- Babies aren't ready to eat solid food until they are about 6 months old.



It's good to ask

If you have questions about **your child's nutrition**, call 8-1-1 to speak to a registered dietitian at HealthLinkBC.

If you have questions about **your child's health**, contact your local Public Health Unit to speak to a registered nurse.

For more information, go to the Fraser Health web site and search 'feeding baby'.

