Feeding Infants and Toddlers

Highlighting Hispanic Heritage Foods

Based on Dietary Guidelines for Americans
Make Every Bite Count

A variety of foods from all the food groups work together to support your child’s health, body and brain.

Human Milk
Feed only human milk for the first 6 months. Continue to feed human milk with food for at least the first 2 years of life. When human milk is not possible, feed iron-fortified commercial milk formula until age 1.

Start Small
At about age 6 months, offer foods from all food groups when possible. Your baby may only eat one bite while learning to like foods.

Nutrition
To grow, your child needs many nutrients, like iron, choline, zinc, calcium and vitamin D. Offer foods that are naturally full of nutrients as often as you can.

YOUR TURN:
Which traditional foods do you serve from each of the food groups?

Keep the traditional taste of Hispanic foods and still help your child eat smart by using MyPlate as a guide.

Begin including spices anytime after age 6 months:
- Onion
- Cilantro
- Basil
- Cinnamon
- Garlic
- Oregano
- Cumin

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Foods to Grow Baby’s Body and Brain

Your baby’s body and brain are changing a lot in the first 2 years of life. Around age 6 months, your baby starts to need more nutrients in addition to human milk or iron-fortified commercial milk formula.

Grow the **brain** for learning.

Build strong **bones and teeth** for life.

Fuel growth and development of **muscles**.

Boost your baby’s **immune system** by breastfeeding for at least 2 years along with food.

**TRY THESE:**
- Chicken
- Beans
- Eggs
- Cheese
- Yogurt
- Oatmeal
- Fish
- Nopales
- Cantaloupe

**YOUR TURN:**
Which foods do you try to serve for your baby’s body and brain?
Starting with **Solid Foods**

Your baby may be ready to start eating small bites of soft food around age 6 months. Introduce first foods when your baby is able to sit upright, shows interest in food, brings food to mouth, and can swallow without choking.

**Offer Foods from All the Food Groups**

Foods from the **Dairy**, **Vegetables**, **Fruits**, **Grains** and **Protein** food groups work together to give your baby nutrition for learning and growing.

**How to Offer First Foods**

- **Introduce one food at a time.** Then wait 3 to 5 days before adding a new food to see if your child has reactions like a rash.
- **Sit and talk with your baby at meals** to create a connection and positive experiences.
- **If your doctor says OK, give foods such as thinned peanut butter and eggs.** Giving these foods can make allergies less likely.

**Include iron-rich foods for optimal development:**
- Ground beef
- Seafood
- Eggs
- Mashed beans
- Cooked dark green vegetables
- Lentils that are soft or pureed until smooth

_TIP!

Also feed iron-fortified grains like:
- Oats
- Barley
- Rice
- Multigrain cereals

**Don’t serve these foods before age 1:**
- Honey, which can make your baby very sick
- Almond, oat or other plant-based nondairy beverages, which don’t have nutrition babies need
- Sweetened or caffeinated drinks like coffee, tea or soda
- Fruit juices

**EXPLORE MORE:**
Watch a video on infant and toddler feeding recommendations for solid food (video 0:08).
Exploring Many Foods

When your baby is ready, offer many different foods, flavors and textures.

Pureed/Creamy:
- Vegetables
- Plain full-fat yogurt
- Meats
- Applesauce

Soft Solids:
- Cooked vegetables
- Eggs
- Shredded cheese
- Ripe banana
- Oatmeal

Soft Lumpy/Minced:
- Cottage cheese
- Beans
- Avocado
- Tomatoes
- Mango
- Shredded meat

Chopped:
- Meat
- Cantaloupe
- Nopales
- Quartered grapes
- Bread

GOOD TO KNOW
At 12+ months old, your baby can eat most foods in small pieces.

Introduce whole milk as a beverage along with food.

Your baby may be hungry one day and not want to eat the next day. This is normal.

You do not have to make your baby finish food on the plate at any age.

Learn Hunger and Fullness Signs
Responding to your baby’s hunger or fullness will help teach how much to eat.

Signs of Hunger:
- Gets excited about food
- Reaches or points to food
- Opens mouth for food

Signs of Fullness:
- Closes mouth
- Turns head away from the breast or bottle
- Relaxes hands

How to Keep Baby Safe from Choking
Stay with your baby during meals.

Don’t serve foods that often cause choking:
- Hot dogs
- Big chunks of meat
- Peanut butter
- Hard candies
- Whole nuts/seeds
- Whole grapes
- Raw vegetables
- Infant cereal in baby bottles

EXPLORE MORE:

How to reduce choking

How to serve finger foods

FUN FACT
Babies don’t need teeth to chew.
Feeding Toddlers

Toddlers between 12 months and 2 years old are learning how to explore food, flavors and textures. Children can eat many of the same wholesome foods as the family if served in small bites and portions.

**Offer**

Whole foods from all the food groups provide nutrition for growing, learning and health.

**Dairy**
- Whole milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, cheeses
- If your doctor recommends it for medical reasons: fortified plain soy beverage

**Vegetables**
- Zucchini, tomatoes, carrots, peas

**Fruits**
- Cantaloupe, pineapple, papaya, strawberries, guava

**Grains**
- Tortillas, masa, rice, bread, cereals

**Protein**
- Meats, eggs, nut butters, beans

**Trade Up**

Limit extra sugar, salt and processed meats, which do not provide health benefits.

- Tortilla chips → Jicama slices

**Milk**

Move to whole dairy milk in a cup at around 12 months of age to help meet calcium, vitamin D and protein needs.

**Why Whole Dairy Milk?**
- Milk includes important fats that are needed for brain growth.
- Milk has a unique package of nutrients that can be difficult to replace.
- Plant-based nondairy drinks made with nuts, rice or coconut do not have the same nutrients found in dairy milk.

If your child has trouble switching to dairy milk, you may want to try:
- Warming the milk.
- Offering lactose-free milk if your child or family is concerned about lactose intolerance.
Growing with the Food Groups

Build healthy eating patterns as a family by mixing and matching foods that your family enjoys and that fit your cultural traditions and budget.

Building Up to a Quesadilla

6+ months:
Avocado slices dipped in iron-fortified cereal, pureed meat or beans, and yogurt mixed with fruit to add more food groups.

TIP!
- At around 6 months of age, your baby needs foods such as lean meats, fortified infant cereals and beans that are rich in iron and zinc.
- Offer cereal as a food, not in a bottle, so baby can learn how to eat.

8 to 12 months:
Mashed avocado, shredded cheese, mashed pinto beans, ground meat, diced tomatoes and rice.

TIP!
- Plain yogurt and cheese can be given as first foods with vegetables, fruits, grains and proteins.
- Keep portions small so your toddler is not overwhelmed.

1 to 2 years:
Soft tortilla with melted cheese, a thin layer of beans and shredded meat, cut into strips. Avocado mixed with salsa as a dip. Add a fruit or strips of bell pepper for more variety.

TIP!
- You can serve whole dairy milk at 1 year old.
- Serve most foods without added salt or sugars.

GOOD TO KNOW
Keep offering foods. It can take 10 times or more to accept new foods.
Beverages for Babies and Toddlers

Make every sip count. Drinks matter for your child’s health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offer Daily</th>
<th>0 to 6 Months</th>
<th>6 to 12 Months</th>
<th>1 to 2 Years</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human milk</td>
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<td>Iron-fortified infant formula (if human milk not available)</td>
<td>Iron-fortified infant formula (if human milk not available)</td>
<td>Whole dairy milk or lactose-free whole milk (2 to 3 cups per day)</td>
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<td>Water with meals (½ to 1 cup per day)</td>
<td>Fortified plain soy beverage if a doctor says there’s an allergy to dairy milk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drinks to Limit</td>
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<td>No more than ½ cup of 100% fruit juice per day</td>
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<td>Drinks to Avoid</td>
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<td>No fruit drinks</td>
<td>No beverages with added sugars during the first 2 years of life</td>
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Healthy Teeth
Fruit juice and sweetened beverages can lead to cavities, or holes in the teeth.

To help prevent cavities:
- Serve whole fruit instead of juice. If you serve fruit juice, add water to make it less sweet.
- Prepare traditional drinks like agua fresca without adding sugar.
- Eat crunchy vegetables and cheese to help keep teeth clean and healthy.

Choose water between meals. Fluoride is important for teeth, and tap water usually has more fluoride than bottled water.

EXPLORE MORE:
Watch this video to learn more about the best drinks for young children.
Plantain and Cheese Sopes

These sopes are crispy on the outside and soft on the inside, with a little sweetness.

Ingredients:
- ½ cup corn flour or masa harina
- ½ ripe plantain, mashed
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup panela or mozzarella cheese, cubed
- Unsalted butter or oil

Preparation:
1. In a bowl mix the corn flour with the mashed plantain. Add the water a little at a time until dough is soft.
2. Make small balls with the dough and place a cube or 1 to 2 teaspoons of cheese in the center as the filling. Press to seal the dough around the cheese.
3. Place balls onto parchment paper and flatten to ½-inch thick circles.
4. In a pan or comal, add butter or oil and cook the mini sopes on medium-high heat until golden brown on both sides.
5. Add a favorite protein and fruit to make this a meal with all 5 food groups.

Makes 7 to 8 sopes

Recipe source: @babychefmx on Instagram

Sopa de Pollo

This classic, comforting soup is perfect for little ones and families.

Ingredients:
- 8 oz chicken with bones
- ¼ cup carrot, peeled and chopped
- ¼ cup leek, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 2 cups unsalted vegetable broth or water from cooking chicken
- ½ cup cooked rice or chopped tortilla
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

Preparation:
1. Cook chicken by boiling. Save the water to use in the soup.
2. Remove bones and any larger pieces of fat and skin, then cut chicken into small pieces.
3. Chop carrot, leek, celery and garlic all very finely.
4. Add olive oil in a saucepan on medium heat. Add the vegetables. Sauté for about 5 minutes until golden brown.
5. Add the broth or water and rice. Let it cook for another 5 minutes over high heat.
6. Add chicken to the broth and vegetables and cook together on medium heat for 10 minutes.
7. Scoop into shallow bowls. Let cool. When serving to babies, strain away some liquid to make eating easier.
8. Sprinkle with your favorite toppings like queso fresco, lime or cilantro.

Makes 4 cups of soup
Additional Resources

**MyPlate Nutrition by Ages** (Myplate.gov)
- [https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages](https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages)

**Simple Food Pairings for Infants and Toddlers** (West Virginia WIC Program)

**Airplane Choo Choo - A Guide to Feeding Your Baby for the First Two Years** (National Dairy Council)
- [https://www.dairymax.org/sites/default/files/Airplane%20Choo%20Choo%202020.pdf](https://www.dairymax.org/sites/default/files/Airplane%20Choo%20Choo%202020.pdf)

**Meal Planning, Shopping and Budgeting for Your Family** (SNAP-Ed)

**I’m One: Let’s Have Fun!** (California WIC)
- [https://myfamily.wic.ca.gov/Content/Documents/NutritionHealth/Toddler/Im-One.pdf](https://myfamily.wic.ca.gov/Content/Documents/NutritionHealth/Toddler/Im-One.pdf)

**I’m Two: Look What I Can Do!** (California WIC)
- [https://myfamily.wic.ca.gov/Content/Documents/NutritionHealth/Toddler/Im-Two.pdf](https://myfamily.wic.ca.gov/Content/Documents/NutritionHealth/Toddler/Im-Two.pdf)

**Flavors of My Kitchen** (Champions for Change)

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This document was built to conform to Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, so individuals with disabilities have access to, and use of, information and data comparable to that provided to individuals without disabilities.