



Feeding - Breastfeeding

Feeding can be an enjoyable, shared family experience and a great way to bond. In the early stages of feeding, you and your baby will learn a lot from one and another. Be patient, enjoy the experience together.

What to Expect

- Meeting your baby's nutritional needs is important for their growth, development and wellbeing.
- It is recommended that babies are exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months.
- Breastfeeding is recommended to continue until 12 months of age and beyond.
- Babies may feed anywhere from 6 to 12 times per day.
- Solid foods can be introduced at around 6 months of age.
- Breastfeeding on demand is recommended to meet the changing nutritional needs of your baby. It involves feeding your baby when they are showing signs of hunger. These include:
 - Sucking noises.
 - Opening mouth.
 - Turning towards your breast.
 - Sucking fingers/fists.
 - Crying (this is usually the last cue).

Challenges

- Your baby might become fussy or refuse a feed. Reasons for this include:
 - Engorgement/getting a large amount of milk too quickly.
 - Low milk supply/slow letdown.
 - Incorrect attachment to the breast.
 - Sore or damaged nipples.
 - Blocked ducts or mastitis.
 - Your baby is overtired or just not hungry.
- As many as 96% of breastfeeding mums experience nipple pain when first attaching their baby to the breast. You may feel like giving up but try and persist as it's usually temporary and there are so many benefits in breastfeeding for both you and your baby. Seek help early if you are having challenges!

Breastfeeding Tips

- Ensure your baby is properly attached to your breast (your baby's mouth is open wide with the top and bottom lips curled out, not tucked in).
- If your baby is attached properly, most of the areola is usually in their mouth and there is no pain.
- If you have pain, carefully take your baby off your breast and then reattach.



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- Breastfeeding is the perfect time to bond and connect with your baby. Some tips include:
 - Soft words.
 - Gentle touches.
 - Speaking to your baby while feeding.

Safety

- Taking care of yourself while breastfeeding is important. Eat a well balanced diet, drink lots of water and rest where you can.
- Avoid co-sleeping while breastfeeding.
- Avoid alcohol, drugs and smoking.



If you have a breastfeeding question call Karitane Careline: 1300 227 464



Feeding - Bottle Feeding

Bottle feeding is used to offer expressed breast milk or formula to your baby. Making it work for you and your baby takes a little preparation. Always ensure that you're using good hygiene techniques (washing hands, sterilising equipment, cleaning benches).

What to Expect

- Bottle fed babies can be fed on demand, similar to breastfed babies. However, this can lead to:
 - Wasted breast milk or formula.
 - Wind pain due to quick flow of milk.
 - Symptoms of reflux.

Challenges

- Fussy feeding behaviour can be common and may be related to:
 - Poor sleep routine.
 - The flow of milk may be too slow or too fast.
 - Getting confused with feeding if they are breast and bottle fed.
 - Being held in an uncomfortable position while feeding.
 - Health issues.
 - Oral abnormalities.

You and your baby are learning together. Be patient, you and your baby can work through any challenges.

Bottle Feeding Tips

- Knowing how much milk is enough for your baby is based on weight gain, contentment between feeds, behaviour during and after the feed, and your baby's general wellbeing.
- Feed your baby their bottle over 20 to 30 minutes to make digestion easier.
- Choose a cow's milk-based formula (if not using expressed breast milk).
- Check the formula meets Australian Standards.
- Follow the mixing directions and expiry date on the formula tin.
- Allow your baby to let you know when they have had enough to drink.
- Seek professional advice before changing formula.

Always hold your baby when feeding. You are nourishing their brains as well as their bodies through bonding and connection.



Safety

- Always check the temperature of the milk before feeding.
- Don't leave your baby unattended with a bottle.
- Avoid putting your baby to sleep while drinking from a bottle.
- Sterilise bottles and equipment until your baby is 12 months to reduce risk of infection.

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Introducing Solids

Starting solids is an exciting time. From 6 months milk alone won't meet your baby's nutritional or developmental needs, so it's recommended to introduce solids at this time (unless medically advised by a health professional).

What to Expect

- A variety of foods other than milk are recommended when your baby begins displaying these signs:
 - Tongue-extrusion has disappeared (stopped pushing objects out of their mouth automatically).
 - Good head control when sitting in a supported position.
 - Interested in others eating.
 - Milk alone no longer satisfies hunger.

Challenges

- Getting messy, spitting out food or even gagging can be normal as your baby learns to eat solids.
 - The gag reflex helps prevent your baby from choking.
- Some babies have a change in digestion when starting solids. If constipation occurs, introduce fibrous foods like pear, kiwi fruit and prunes, avoid bananas, persimmon and starchy food for a few days.
- Even without teeth your baby can learn to chew. Start cleaning teeth with a soft cloth and water once teeth appear.
- Your child won't be used to new textures like lumpy or dry foods. Be patient as they learn to accept and enjoy solid foods. It is important to encourage your child to progress to lumpy foods at around 6 to 9 months.

Tips for Introducing Solids

- Offer solid food on a spoon 30 minutes after a milk feed.
- Start slowly – offer solids once per day and work up to 3 times per day over a 4-week period.
- Start with pureed texture and progress to family foods by 12 months.
- Offer iron rich foods like iron fortified cereals, meat, poultry, fish, vegetables, fruits, legumes and tofu.
- You can introduce foods in any order.
- Allow your baby to decide when they have had enough. These signs include turning or looking away, pushing food out or closing their mouth, playing with or throwing food.
- From 6 months of age, you can introduce a cup for water.
- Gradually wean off bottles by 12 months of age.

Sharing a meal is a sociable and enjoyable experience. Where possible have your meals with your baby. Family meal times are a great way to connect each day.



Safety

- Stay with your baby at meal times.
- Use a harness in high chairs.
- For infants under 12 months, avoid whole nuts, seeds, hard fruit, hard vegetables, honey and raw eggs.
- Avoid herbal teas, juice and soft drinks.

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