



Table Foods and Finger Foods

I'm ready to learn how to feed myself!

● What you can do to help:

- Choose safe, simple foods for baby to try.
- Offer foods at regular meal and snack times.
- Let baby decide how much (and whether or not) to eat.

How do babies feel as they learn to eat on their own?

❖ **You are important to me.** I will be calmer and more willing to try new foods with you nearby. Watch me in case I have trouble chewing or swallowing.

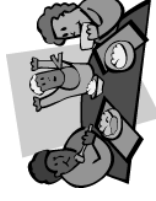


❖ Help me learn to feed myself!

- **Let me pick up food with my fingers.** I need to touch and play with the food to learn.
- **Learning takes practice.** Let me go at my own pace.
- **Learning to eat is messy.** Expect to clean up a few spills.

❖ Help me to enjoy meals!

- **Let me eat at the table with the family.** I will learn by watching you.
- **Make meal times calm.** Turn the TV off. Don't allow toys at the table.
- **Talk softly to me.** Tell me the names of the foods I'm eating.



❖ **I can "chew" lots of different foods.** Even if I don't have teeth, I can still eat table foods. My gums are very strong!
Please don't chew foods for me. Chewing my food for me can transfer unhealthy bacteria.

Try these soft foods first (8 to 10 months).

Scrambled egg or chopped hard-boiled egg
Cooked, tender meat or chicken, ground or chopped
Cooked vegetables or soft fruit, cut small or mashed
Soft cheese, tofu, or cooked and mashed beans

Try these foods next (10 to 12 months).

Cheerios or Kix	Soft, cooked vegetables
Graham crackers (no honey)	Soft, peeled fruit (banana, papaya, etc.)
Toast strips or noodles	Cheese slices or cubes, cottage cheese
Soups made with soft foods	Soft, chopped chicken, fish, hamburger



Meal Ideas

Breakfast

Infant cereal or toast strips
Scrambled egg
Mashed or diced fruit
Breastmilk or formula in a cup

Morning Snack

Yogurt or cottage cheese
Water in a cup

Lunch

Ground or chopped chicken
Macaroni
Soft, cooked vegetable
Breastmilk or formula in a cup

Afternoon Snack

Cheese cubes or slices
Cheerios
Water in a cup

Dinner

Ground beef, chopped
Mashed potatoes or poi
Diced, soft fruit or vegetable
Breastmilk or formula in a cup

Bedtime Snack

Infant cereal or crackers
Breastmilk or formula

Safety reminders

- Cut food into small pieces, and remove bones, seeds, and pits.
- Avoid choking foods until baby is older -- hard candies, raw vegetables, nuts, seeds, chips, popcorn, hot dogs, sausages, raisins, grapes, corn, peanut butter, marshmallows.

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