

in FORM

Deutschlands Initiative für gesunde Ernährung
und mehr Bewegung



Gesund ins Leben
Netzwerk Junge Familie

The best food for babies



A dietary roadmap for babies

Dear Parents,

your child is now born, and a new and exciting phase in life is just beginning, one that is certain to bring plenty of changes. This also includes making sure that your baby receives the right diet. We'll show you what counts. Our 'Roadmap' will guide you perfectly through the first year.

Healthy Start – Young Family Network

Month



An acquired taste

Babies acquire their first experience with food while still in the womb, as some of the flavours in the mother's diet pass into the amniotic fluid.

This continues while breastfeeding. The aromas in the milk vary, depending on what the mother has recently eaten. Your baby will become familiar with more flavours if your own diet contains a large number of different foods. It's likely in this case that your child will enjoy a varied diet and be keen to try out different foods later on.

In contrast, industrially manufactured formula always tastes the same.



Complementary foods are given additionally to the mother's milk. This way your child will also become familiar with new flavours. It also brings variety to the consistency of its diet. Now your child will try pap for the first time, after an exclusively liquid diet. The baby food will become increasingly chunky until your child receives 'real' food.

Food is more than just supplying nutrition

Feeding your child means more than just providing nutrients like vitamins, minerals and calories. Regular mealtimes and physical intimacy give your child warmth and security. This strengthens the loving bond between you.

Enjoy this shared time together, and make sure to create a calm atmosphere.

Feeding is also a wonderful experience for fathers!





Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding: the best thing for the mother and child

There is nothing better than to breastfeed exclusively from the start. This means: your child will only receive mother's milk – no drinks, juices, milk or other foods. Breastfeeding sometimes is still better than not at all if you cannot or do not want to breastfeed exclusively. So you can breastfeed your child, and still feed it formula. This will also allow your child to enjoy the benefits of mother's milk.

Mother's milk – always perfect for the baby

Mother's milk provides your baby with all the important nutrients that it needs to develop a healthy body and spirit. As a mother, you produce precisely the amount of milk that your child needs in exactly the right composition. This way the mother's milk satisfies hunger and quenches thirst at the same time.

Tip!

Do you have any questions about breastfeeding?

Ask your midwife for advice. Right from the start, if at all possible. All health insurance providers cover the cost of counselling. Gynaecologists, paediatricians and breastfeeding consultants will also provide information and advice on breastfeeding (see page 15).

Breastfeeding is practical and free

Mother's milk is available all the time, wherever you are. It always has just the right temperature. An additional benefit: there are no extra costs for powder or formula.

Breastfeeding: how often?

The child will decide for itself how often and how long it wants to be breastfed. This means: the number of breastfeeding meals per day, and the duration of each one, depend entirely on what your baby needs. It is perfectly normal if your baby wants to be fed again after 1 to 3 hours during the first week of life.

Important!

Your baby will drink smaller quantities of milk more frequently over the first few weeks, also during the night. It will start to drink more, but less frequently, as soon as it sleeps for longer periods in the night.

Breastfeeding: how long in total?

It is recommended to breastfeed all infants during their first six months. Mother's milk is also the first choice for premature babies or sick infants. There are only a few exceptions, and your doctor would be glad to provide information. You should breastfeed exclusively until the start of the 5th month. It is good to continue breastfeeding, even after your baby has started to receive baby food. You and your baby decide how long you want to continue breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding is more than just satisfying hunger and thirst. It is an intimate, quiet moment that strengthens the bond between mother and child.



If you do not breastfeed ...

You are unable to breastfeed, don't want to at all or solely breastfeed your child? In this case you should use powder to prepare a bottle (technical name: formula). There is no other alternative.



*Pay attention to the quantity:
the measuring spoon must
be level (not heaped).*

Formula for the entire 1st year

Your baby will start off with infant formula. It goes by the name "**Pre**" or "**1**". You can use it to feed your baby from the beginning, and even keep doing so throughout the first year, after the baby food has been introduced. Feed formula just as you would mother's milk: as often and as much as your baby wants. Do not give your child follow-on formula (with the number **2**) until you introduce complementary foods. It is not actually necessary to switch from infant formula to follow-on formula.

HA formula if there is a risk of allergies

Your baby will receive HA formula if you do not exclusively breastfeed your child or at all, and you as a parent or the siblings of your child suffer from allergies. "HA" stands for hypoallergenic, which means that the constituents are less likely to trigger an allergic reaction than "normal" formula. You can switch to "normal" formula as soon as you feed your child complementary food.

Important!

Ask you paediatrician or your midwife if you are not certain which diet is right for your baby.



Special food only on your doctor's advice

You should consult your paediatrician if your baby frequently experiences flatulence, cramps or constipation, or if it burps or spits. Only feed your baby special food on your doctor's advice.

How many bottles?

When, how often and how much you feed depends on how hungry your baby is. Pay attention to its signals! The information provided by the manufacturer or on the packaging will give you some pointers. Do not be influenced by the recommended amounts or the line measures on the bottles. Your baby is full if it turns away, even before the bottle is empty. If it rejects the bottle right at the start, it simply isn't hungry. Your baby is receiving sufficient food if it seems content and is gaining weight. Your baby will drink smaller quantities more frequently over the first few weeks, also during the night. It will start to drink more in each meal, but less frequently, as soon as it sleeps for longer periods in the night.

Important!

Preparing formula:

- Always prepare formula fresh, immediately before feeding.
- The water should be lukewarm (no more than 40°C) when shaking. This way you will prevent scalding.
- Throw away leftovers. Do not reheat.
- Rinse and clean the bottle and the nipple thoroughly right after each meal, and leave them both to dry completely.

The best things to use when preparing formula is tap water: leave it to run until cold water comes out of the tap.





Continuing to breastfeed and baby food/complementary food

Ready for baby food?

The precise time to start with the 1st baby food differs from child to child. But you will notice when your child is ready: it will become interested in what other people are eating. It is able to put things in its mouth all by itself, and does not use its tongue to press out the food. It can hold its head upright and stable, provided you support it when sitting. The time is right for the first spoon of baby food no earlier than the start of the 5th month, and no later than the start of the 7th. Continue breastfeeding for other meals, even while introducing the baby food.

Step for step toward the first baby food

The first baby food is vegetable-potato-meat pap. Start with a few spoons of puréed vegetables before breastfeeding at lunchtime. If that goes well, then gradually switch to a meal consisting entirely of baby food. Your baby will continue to receive mother's milk or formula for the other meals. You can make the baby food yourself, or buy it ready-made.

Be patient!

Your baby may not be ready to take this step if it has considerable difficulty getting used to the food or the spoon. Take a break and offer your baby the spoon again after 1 or two weeks. Some babies have trouble getting used to the new taste. These children need to try a new ingredient several times before they acquire a taste for it.



Vegetable-potato-meat baby food

For one portion

Basic recipe

- 100 g vegetable (e.g. cauliflower, carrots, courgette)
- 50 g potato
- 30 g lean meat (e.g. beef, pork, lamb, poultry)
- 1 tbsp. canola oil
- 1½ tbsp. fruit juice (or puréed fruit as a dessert)

Preparation



1. Wash the vegetables, peel the potatoes and cut into small pieces.



2. Braise the vegetables with the finely chopped meat in a small amount of water (approx. 10 minutes).



3. Purée together with the juice.



4. Mix in the canola oil. Add some water if the baby food is too solid.

Tip!

- Show some variety with the vegetables.
- Use fish instead of meat 1–2 times per week (e.g. salmon).
- You can occasionally substitute pasta, rice or other cereal types for the potatoes.

If you serve ready-made baby food ...

- Pick baby food made of the following basic ingredients: vegetables + potato + meat. You can also choose other ingredients like pasta, rice and such like instead of potato.
- Do not add salt to the baby food, even if it is too bland for your taste.

Milk-cereal baby food

Once your baby has fully accepted the first baby food, you can add the second one around 1 month later. The milk-cereal baby food is good for the evening, for example.

You can prepare your own milk-cereal baby food, or buy it ready-made. It's the ingredients that count. If you buy ready-made baby food, make certain that milk (powder) and whole grain cereal are the main ingredients.

"Not so sweet, please"

The milk-cereal baby food and the cereal-fruit baby food should only taste slightly sweet. Do not sweeten the baby food additionally. Leave out honey for the first year.



"That's enough now"

Nobody knows better than your baby when it is full. Do not pressure your child to finish its plate or the bottle: one or two brief encouragements are enough if your child stops eating before it is finished.

Carry on breast-feeding, even when giving baby food. This way you will continue to give your baby the protection that mother's milk provides, and that your baby needs.



Basic recipe: milk-cereal baby food

For one portion

- 200 ml whole milk, 3.5 % fat (no unpasteurised or raw milk)
- 20 g whole grain cereal (flakes) or semolina
- 2 tbsp. fruit juice or mashed fruit

Preparation



1. Mix the cereal flakes into cold milk, stir the semolina into simmering milk.



2. Bring to the boil and leave to simmer for around 3 minutes.



3. Stir in the fruit juice or mashed fruit.



4. All done!

Tip!

- Use whole milk. Your baby needs a little more fat during the first year.
- You can also use infant formula instead of the milk.

20 g of whole grain cereal flakes are approximately equivalent to ...

2 heaped tbsp. of oatmeal, spelt flakes or
1 heaped tbsp. of semolina.

Instant cereals for baby food:
check the information on the packaging.



Cereal-fruit baby food

After around another month you can replace breastfeeding or the bottle of formula in the afternoon with cereal-fruit baby food. You will continue to breastfeed in the morning and when needed.

The best drink: water

Your baby will need additional drinks other than mother's milk or formula once it has started to eat baby food 3 times a day: use water. You can also give your baby something to drink earlier.



Tip!

Learning the right way to drink:

at the start you should fill the receptacle almost to the brim so that your baby's upper lip becomes moist. It will then automatically open its mouth.

Permanent suckling or a 'bottle for the night' can damage the teeth. This is why you should give your baby its drinks in a cup, a glass or a mug.



The older your baby becomes, the more it can – and wants to – move and try things out. It needs to in order to ensure a healthy development.

Basic recipe: cereal-fruit baby food

For one portion

90 ml	water
20 g	whole grain cereal (flakes) or semolina
100 g	mashed, finely grated or puréed fruit or stewed fruit, e.g. apples, pears ...
1 tsp.	canola oil

Preparation



1. Mix the cereal into cold water, or stir the semolina into simmering water. Bring to the boil and leave to simmer for around 3 minutes.



2. Add the fresh, puréed fruit.



3. Mix in the canola oil.



4. All done!

Tip!

- One type of cereal and one type of fruit are enough in one meal.
- But do vary the fruit: apples, pears, bananas, peaches, nectarines and apricots are easy on a baby's tummy.

If you serve ready-made baby food ...

The main ingredients in suitable ready-made baby foods will be whole grain cereal and fruit.



Learning to eat and move

Learning to eat

Create a calm atmosphere and take your time to feed your child.

Your baby will be delighted if you give it your full attention. Look at your child during feeding, and talk to it. You will notice: your child will show you whether it wants to continue eating, or when it is full. Introduce variety when you start with the baby foods with vegetable and fruit to allow your child to experience a range of flavours. Offer new foods several times, but do not be pushy. Sometimes children need time to get used to new tastes. Soon your child will want to hold the spoon and guide it to its mouth by itself. Let your child do as much as it can on its own, and provide support whenever necessary.

I want to kick!

Babies have a real urge to move around. It's the best way for them to develop well.

Pay attention to your child: it will show you if it wants to kick or move about. Give your baby as much opportunity as possible – it might be while changing its nappy or having a bath, or on a safe area of the floor, covered with a rug. Keep the time your child spends in a car seat, a high chair and similar constrained places to a minimum.

Screens – no thanks!

Everything is new and exciting to babies. They explore the world by touching, by pulling themselves up, and by crawling. Encourage your child in its urge to move around, and do not leave it sitting mute in front of a television, tablet PC or smartphone. Singing a song or speaking in a loving voice are good ways to calm your baby down.



Advice and assistance



Addresses of experts close to you

Breastfeeding: www.hebammenverband.de,
www.afs-stillen.de, www.bdl-stillen.de, www.lalecheliga.de,
www.stillen.de

Nutrition: www.vdoe.de, www.vdd.de, www.dge.de,
www.quetheb.de, www.hebammenverband.de

Baby & Essen



The "Baby & Essen" app ensures that parents will always have a detailed nutritional roadmap for the 1st year of life right on hand. Available free of charge for Android and iOS.
www.gesund-ins-leben.de/app



Recommended reading



Ernährung von Säuglingen – aid, DGE,
order no. 1357,
www.aid-medienshop.de, €2.50

Empfehlungen für die Ernährung von Säuglingen – FKE,
www.fke-shop.de, €4.00

National Breastfeeding Committee –
www.bfr.bund.de/stillkommission

Additional counselling services under:
www.gesund-ins-leben.de



IN FORM is Germany's initiative to promote healthy diets and physical activity. It was founded in 2008 by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and by the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG), and since then, in cooperation with project partners, has been active nationwide in all areas of life. Its aim is to initiate a permanent change in peoples' dietary and exercise habits. Visit www.in-form.de for more information.

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