

8-10 MONTHS

As your baby grows older he/she is slowly developing his/her own individual food likes and dislikes. He/she has been introduced to many new foods so far and has many more to go. Do not make the mistake of forcing your baby to learn too fast.

If your baby wrinkles up his/her nose at a new food, spits it out or refuses to open his/her mouth, this does not automatically mean he/she hates it. Your baby may refuse it once, take it the next time it is offered and then refuse it the third time. Adults do this too; depending on how the food is cooked, their mood at the time and the other foods served at the meal. As a general rule of thumb, try a specific food at least on six different occasions before deciding your baby really will not eat it. (Even then, do not give up hope!).

By now, your baby is probably ready to start feeding him/herself. The wise parent will be prepared for a mess with wet towels and a lot of patience! Let your child feed him/herself when he/she wants to try. If you insist on continuing to feed your baby after he/she has expressed an interest in self-feeding, your baby may get the idea that the job is yours and let you continue longer than you would like. You may want to get a specially made bowl, which has a round rubber ring on the bottom to help the plate stick to the table.

NEW FOODS TO OFFER

9 1/2 months - Plain yogurt, finely chopped foods

10 months - Ice cream

LUMPY FOODS

Starting at eight months, it is good to gradually make your baby's strained foods a little "lumpy". You can expect a little resistance at first, but do not force the issue. You may find that your baby is more willing to eat the lumps, which he/she feeds him/herself than the ones you offer on the spoon (as sloppy as that practice may be). Your baby is now learning a chewing motion, even if he/she does not have many teeth yet. Once he/she is accustomed to little lumps, you can start to make them larger and larger up to the point where he/she is eating the finely chopped foods instead of strained foods.

FOODS TO AVOID IN INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Nuts)	These small hard foods are likely to be swallowed whole, either on purpose or by accident, causing choking.
Small hard pieces of candy)	
Berries)	
Popcorn and fresh corn kernels)	
Raisins)	
Hotdogs)	
Grapes)	
)	These foods are more likely than most to cause allergies.
Chocolate)	
Cocoa)	
Egg Whites)	

A WORD ABOUT SWEETS!

Sweet foods should never be used as a bribe to finish a meal nor should they be used as a reward for being “good”.

Postpone giving candy to your baby as long as possible. The excessive sugar is not good for his teeth and may cause the early loss of his/her teeth. In later years excess sugar and candy may mean expensive dental bills. Also, sweet cookies, cakes and pastries are not very wholesome from a nutritional point of view.

The best dessert you can give your baby is fruit. It will taste sweet, but still has extra nutritional value.

AVOID OVERWEIGHT

- a. Put small portions of food on the plate, then if your baby wants “seconds”, let him/her have them.
- b. Babies may eat less the second six months of life. This is normal.
- c. Do not let your child snack on sweets. Sweets provide nothing but empty calories and can lead to tooth decay and overweight. Examples of good snacks (food that help nourish your baby and taste good too) are unsweetened fruit juices, fresh fruit, whole grain or enriched breads, left over food from lunch and dinner, cereal, cheese and plain crackers.