

# Understanding Infant Hunger and Satiety Cues

## Your baby may be hungry if he or she...

- Continues to smack lips after draining the bottle<sup>1</sup>
- Moves his/her head from side to side<sup>2</sup>
- Opens his/her mouth<sup>2</sup>
- Sticks out his/her tongue<sup>2</sup>
- Places his/her hands, fingers, and fists to the mouth<sup>2</sup>
- Puckers his/her lips as if to suck<sup>2</sup>
- Shows the rooting reflex (ie, moves the mouth in the direction of something that's stroking or touching its cheek)<sup>2</sup>
- Appears hungry, searching for something to suck shortly after feedings<sup>3</sup>

## Your baby may be full if he or she is...

- Fidgeting<sup>1</sup>
- Easily distracted during feeding<sup>1</sup>
- Appears relaxed or drowsy<sup>4</sup>

## If your baby cries within an hour of a “good” feeding, consider possible sources of distress other than hunger:

- Cold<sup>2</sup>
- Hot<sup>2</sup>
- Tired<sup>2</sup>
- Overstimulated<sup>2</sup>
- Needs diaper change<sup>2</sup>
- Needs cuddling<sup>2</sup>
- Needs to suck (eg, on a pacifier)<sup>1</sup>



## References

1. AAP. Amount and schedule of formula feedings. 2. Formula feeding FAQs. The Nemours Foundation. 3. AAP. Signs of feeding difficulties. 4. Disantis 2011

# Feeding Tips For Your Child

- When starting solid foods, give your baby one new food at a time - not mixtures.
- Give the new food for 2 to 3 days before adding another new food.
- After each new food, watch for any allergic reactions such as diarrhea, rash, or vomiting. If any of these occur, stop using the new food and consult with your child's doctor.
- Single-grain cereals are usually introduced first. But for most babies it does not matter what the first solid foods are.
- Though many pediatricians will recommend starting vegetables before fruits, there is no evidence that your baby will develop a dislike for vegetables if fruit is given first.
- If your baby has been mostly breastfeeding, he may benefit from baby food made with meat, which contains more easily absorbed sources of iron and zinc that are needed by 4 to 6 months of age. Check with your child's doctor.
- Do not give cow's milk until the baby is 12 months of age.
- Fruit juice without sugar can be started when the baby is able to drink from a cup
- Avoid honey in any form for the first year because it can cause a type of botulism.
- Do not put your baby in bed with a bottle propped in his/her mouth. Propping the bottle is linked to ear infections and choking. Once your baby's teeth are present, propping the bottle can cause tooth decay.
- Healthy babies usually require little or no extra water, except in very hot weather. When solid food is first fed to your baby, extra water is often needed.
- Do not limit your baby's food choices to the ones you like. Offering a wide variety of foods early will pave the way for good eating habits later

For more information, visit the American Academy of Pediatrics web site,  
<http://www.healthychildren.org>.

# Preventing Food Allergies

## What Are Some of the Foods Commonly Associated With Food Allergies?

- Food allergies can cause problems ranging from eczema to life-threatening allergic reactions. These reactions are usually associated with the intake of cow's milk, soy, egg, fish, shellfish, peanuts, and tree nuts.

## Who Is Affected?

- Infants at risk for developing food allergy are those with a biological parent or sibling with existing, or a history of, allergic rhinitis, asthma, atopic dermatitis, or food allergy.

## Can Food Allergies Be Prevented?

- Restricting a mother's diet during pregnancy and while breast-feeding is not effective at preventing food allergies
- Breast milk is the least likely food to cause an allergic reaction; it also helps develop an infant's immune system. Experts recommend breast-feeding as the sole source of nutrition for the first 6 months.
- For babies at risk of food allergy who are not breast-fed, the use of extensively hydrolyzed infant formulas (instead of traditional, cow's milk formula) may be considered as a preventive strategy. In these formulas, the protein is broken down into smaller parts that are easier for a baby to digest than larger protein molecules.
- After 4 to 6 months, single-ingredient infant foods including fruits, vegetables and cereal grains can be introduced one at a time. This slow process gives parents or caregivers a chance to identify and eliminate any food that causes an allergic reaction.

Source: American Academy of Asthma Allergy and Immunology