

Help me be

HEALTHY



Birth to 6 months

My name is: _____

I weigh _____ pounds. I am _____ inches long.

A special note for me: _____

Play with me!



Let me be active. Put me on a blanket on the floor. Sit with me on the floor. Watch how I stretch and kick my legs and move my arms. I am making them stronger.

Put me on my tummy. I will learn to push myself up with my arms. I will learn to roll over.

Look what I can do!

I am ready to learn about you, about me, and the world I live in. I learn best when I feel happy, loved, and safe.

Birth to 3 months

The world is new to me and it can be scary. I cry a lot at first. Crying is my way to say I need you. When you come to me, I calm down. I learn that you care.

I must learn what day and night are. At first, I sleep 2 to 3 hours, wake up, eat, and go back to sleep again. It might take 3 months or more to learn to sleep through the night. Please be patient as I learn.

I know your voice. I like to watch you and learn what you do. Show me things and tell me about them.

4 to 6 months



I start to settle into a routine. I can sleep longer at night. I am growing strong and active.

I can hold my head up. I also use my hands to pick things up and put them in my mouth. Keep an eye on me so I don't choke or swallow anything that could hurt me.

I know my name when you say it. I babble *ba-ba-ba!* and I laugh. Let's play peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake. Please read to me. Show me the pictures and tell me what they are.

Health and Safety Tips

- I need checkups and shots to stay healthy. I should visit the doctor a few days after I am born and again before one month, then at 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months of age.
- Ask my doctor if I need a Vitamin D supplement.
- Clean my mouth after I eat. Wipe my gums with a clean, wet, soft cloth.
- I'll go through growth spurts, around 2 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months. I may want to breastfeed longer and more often for a few days during these times.
- Never put me to bed with a bottle or prop a bottle so that I have to eat by myself. I can choke, get an earache, or ruin my teeth. I need you to hold and love me while I am eating.
- Put me on my back to sleep for every nap and at night.
- Use a firm and flat mattress in a safety-approved crib, bassinet, or portable crib—never put me to sleep on a couch or in your bed.
- Share your room with me, not your bed. Place my crib, bassinet, or portable crib in the same room where you sleep but separate from your sleep space.
- Keep all pillows, blankets, and toys out of my sleep space.
- Never leave me alone at bath time or while changing me.



- Buckle me into an infant car seat when we ride in a car. Install my seat in the car's back seat, facing backwards. It's the law!
- Keep me away from cigarette smoke, drugs, and alcohol. Those habits are not healthy for you or me.

Ask the WIC Nutritionist if you need help with any of these tips.

I am your baby.

Please help me.

I want to grow strong in body, heart, and mind.



I grow best when you:

- Hold and cuddle me.
- Smile and talk to me.
- Listen to me when I “talk” to you with my face and body.

Feed me right...with food and love.

Feed me breast milk.

It is the only food I need for the first 6 months. If you choose not to use breast milk, feed me baby formula with iron.

I know when I need to eat.

I will show you that I am hungry when I:

- Move my arms and legs.
- Turn my head and open my mouth.
- Stick my tongue out or smack my lips.
- Suck on my hand or fuss a little.

I know how much to eat.

I will show you that I am full when I:

- Stop sucking and let go of the nipple.
- Look relaxed or sleepy.
- Frown, fuss, and kick if you try to feed me.

I need your touch.

Hold me when you feed me.

I feel safe in your arms. Look at my face and into my eyes. I will learn to look back. I love to look at your face. Talk to me. I will learn to smile and coo.

Sometimes I may take a break from eating. I am not full yet; I just want to rest or share some special time with you.

Help me stay awake while you feed me. Things that may help are undressing me to my diaper or rubbing my back. If I drink from a bottle, do not let me fall asleep with milk in my mouth. I could choke or get an earache.

You want the best for me!

I eat more when I am having a growth spurt.

Growth spurts usually occur at 2 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months, but can happen at any time. I may want to breastfeed longer and more often for a few days during these times.

Your body will make more milk, so don't worry. I may act hungry after I finish a bottle and need an additional 1 to 2 ounces after some feedings.

How will you know I am eating enough?

You'll know I'm getting enough to eat if I'm growing just like the doctor says and if I'm wetting 6 or more diapers every day.

Birth to 4 months

In my first 4 months, I'll eat a lot, about 8 to 12 times every day. At first, my tummy is really small, but it gets bigger as I grow. By the time I'm a month old, I can hold around 2 to 3 ounces of breastmilk or infant formula at a time.

4 to 6 months

When I'm between 4 and 6 months, I won't need to eat as often but I'll drink more breastmilk or infant formula at each feeding.

Counting my wet diapers and growth will help you make sure I'm getting enough to eat!

Keep me safe while I eat.

I can get sick from germs and the wrong food. Please::

- Wash your hands before you feed me or fix my food and formula.
- Put only pumped breast milk or formula in a bottle if you use a bottle to feed me.
- Mix infant formula following the directions on the container or how the doctor tells you.
- Store bottles of breast milk or formula in the fridge. Use breast milk within 4 days. Use formula within 24 hours.
- Never heat my bottle or food in a microwave oven. It can get too hot and burn my mouth.
- Throw out formula left in the bottle when I am finished eating.
- Refrigerate breast milk left in the bottle when I am finished eating. It may be used within 2 hours.
- Do not feed me water, unless the doctor tells you to.
- Do not feed me honey or food made with honey. It can make me sick.
- Do not let me eat (or taste) the food you are eating. I may not be ready.

When can I try a new food?

I grow best on breast milk or formula. Do not feed me any other food until I am 6 months old.

Ask my doctor or the WIC Nutritionist if I am ready to try a new food. I must be able to:

- Sit up and hold my head steady.
- Show I want food by opening my mouth to take it from a spoon.
- Show I do not want food by closing my mouth or

Healthy Eating Habits

I learn so much by watching you, so let me sit and join the family meal. I can watch and learn about taking food from the spoon, chewing my food, resting between bites of food, and more!

Baby cereal fortified with iron is usually the first food introduced. The cereal is mixed in a bowl with breastmilk or formula to make it very thin, like cream soup.

Please talk to the WIC Nutritionist if you have any questions about feeding me.

Tummy Troubles

Babies must get used to food in their tummies. So, I may sometimes spit up, get gas, grunt, and turn red when I have a bowel movement. It does not hurt and goes away as I grow.

- I spit up less if I am calm when I eat and stop eating when I get full.
- I swallow air when I eat or cry. If I swallow too much, I might need to be burped. Hold me with my tummy against your chest or lap. Gently pat or rub my back.
- I might have one or more bowel movements a day. Sometimes, I might not have any for a day or two. This is not constipation. Constipation is a hard, dry stool that hurts to pass and makes me cry.

Please talk to the WIC Nutritionist if you need help recognizing my needs.



NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child and Family Well-Being
Community Nutrition Services Section
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