

# Feeding Our Youngest

## 12 Months

**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

What an exciting time for your baby and you. As your baby approaches his first birthday, he is learning and mastering many skills and abilities. In many ways, he closely resembles an older child. Though he is moving in that direction, we want to talk about some unique needs of the 12-month-old.

For starters, a healthful eating pattern should include a variety of foods that are rich in calcium, vitamins A, C, and D, and iron. This variety of foods will provide the vitamins and minerals your child needs to thrive.

### Building Blocks: Foods high in...



Vitamin C	Vitamin A	Iron
Apricots	Broccoli	Animal sources: beef, pork, lamb, veal
Broccoli	Carrots	Chicken/turkey, especially dark meat poultry
Cantaloupe	Pumpkin	Plant sources: dark green leafy vegetables
Grapefruit	Mixed Vegetables	Iron-fortified cereal
Oranges	Spinach	Beans, legumes, lentils, tofu
Spinach	Yellow Squash	Strawberries

Pairing iron-rich foods with foods high in vitamin C helps your baby absorb iron better.

Another question that may come up about this time is “what should my baby be drinking?” Pedi-






atricians and health-care professionals encourage parents to continue breast milk or infant formula until at least 1 year of age. At age 12 months, your baby is probably ready for cow’s milk, and it needs to be **whole** milk. Why is whole milk important? The fat in whole milk is essential to the proper development of your baby’s nervous system. Your baby doesn’t get much fat yet from other foods in her diet, and fat is needed for good health. Unless her pediatrician says otherwise, you will want to continue whole milk until your child is 2 years old. After that, a lower fat milk will be a good choice. Whole milk is also a great source of calcium, vitamin D, and protein.

You might notice that your child’s appetite may not be as big as it was at age 8 to 9 months, or you may see that your child is hungrier at meal and snack times than before. Babies have growth spurts and will be hungry for fuel to support their growth. Your baby may be walking by now,

or crawling rapidly from here to there. All that exercise needs fuel. So how much do you feed your baby?

Here is a sample daily meal pattern for your 12-month-old:

<p><b>What is in a Breakfast?</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk (4 fl oz or ½ cup)</li> <li>• Vegetables, Fruit, or Both (¼ cup)</li> <li>• Grains (½ oz eq)</li> <li>• Sometimes we serve a meat/meat alternate (such as eggs, yogurt, or other foods) in place of the grains at breakfast.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What is in a Lunch or Supper?</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk (4 fl oz or ½ cup)</li> <li>• Meats/Meat Alternates (1 oz eq)</li> <li>• Vegetables (⅓ cup)</li> <li>• Fruit (⅓ cup)</li> <li>• Grains (½ oz eq)</li> </ul>
<p><b>What is in a Snack? We Pick 2:</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk (4 fl oz or ½ cup)</li> <li>• Meats/Meat Alternates (½ oz eq)</li> <li>• Vegetables (½ cup)</li> <li>• Fruit (½ cup)</li> <li>• Grains (½ oz eq)</li> </ul>

*fl oz = fluid ounces; oz = ounces; oz eq = ounce equivalent*

*Ounce equivalents are a way to measure amounts of food. What counts as an ounce-equivalent (oz-equiv) of grains? In general, 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, cooked pasta, or cooked cereal can be considered as 1 ounce-equivalent from the Grains Group.*

Let this serve as a guideline — not every day will fit perfectly into this pattern, but the amounts and variety outlined here are important for baby’s growth and health.

**Happy mealtimes, and best wishes for feeding your youngest!**

## For More Information

[https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/Mealtimes\\_with\\_Toddlers\\_Family\\_Handout.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/Mealtimes_with_Toddlers_Family_Handout.pdf)

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