

Infant feeding (6–12 months)

Frequently Asked Questions



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH

How do I wean my baby?

Wean your baby gradually. Give your baby and yourself time to adjust!

If you are breastfeeding, give yourself time to let your milk supply decrease slowly, without discomfort.

Weaning from breast to a bottle or cup

It is recommended that babies be fed only breast milk for the first six months of life, with the addition of nutrient-rich solid foods at six months with continued breastfeeding for two years or more.

If you are breastfeeding and choose to wean your baby from breast milk when your baby is younger than nine months of age, you will need to feed your baby a commercial iron fortified infant formula. Call the Healthy Children Info Line, 519-883-2245, for information about what type of formula to give your baby.

If your baby is between nine and twelve months of age, you may wean her to an iron fortified infant formula or whole cow's milk if she is eating a variety of iron-rich foods. You also may want to think about weaning directly from the breast to a cup.



How to wean from the breast to a bottle or cup

- Gradually replace one feeding at a time with a bottle or cup until all the feedings have been replaced. Most mothers leave the morning and evening feedings till last
- Wait a few days before stopping another feeding, to let your milk supply go down slowly
- At the time of the missed feeding, express only the amount of milk needed to relieve any discomfort

Take as long as you want to wean your baby. Do what is right for you and your baby. Some mothers choose to wean over a longer period of time, keeping an evening and/or morning feed well past their child's second birthday.

Weaning from a bottle to a cup

- Most babies are ready to start drinking from a cup between six and eight months of age. Start giving small amounts of breast milk or formula or whole cow's milk (if baby is over nine months) in a cup so your baby can get used to the cup
- As your baby takes more milk or formula in a cup, gradually give less in the bottle, until your baby is drinking only from the cup
- It may take until your baby is between 12 to 18 months of age before your baby gets all the milk needed from a cup

For more information about weaning your baby, call the Healthy Children Info Line at 519-883-2245.



When can I give my baby cow's milk?

- Breast milk is the preferred milk for your baby for up to two years and beyond
- Whole/homogenized (3.25% milk fat) cow's milk may be offered between nine and twelve months of age, once your baby is eating a variety of iron-rich foods every day
- Lower fat milk such as skim, 1%, and 2% does not have enough fat and energy and should not be given to babies under two years of age
- Soy or rice beverages do not have enough fat, protein or energy for proper growth and development and should not be given to babies under two years of age

Should I be giving my baby water?

- After six months of age, once your baby is drinking from a cup, a small amount of water—up to 60 ml (2 oz) can be offered for thirst between meals
- Water should not be used to replace milk

How much juice does my baby need?

- Babies do not really need to drink any juice at all
- After six months of age if you choose to give juice, offer only 100% unsweetened pasteurized fruit juice in a cup as part of a meal or snack
- Offer no more than 60 ml (2 oz) of juice a day

For more information and to speak to a Public Health Nurse, please call the Healthy Children Info Line at 519-883-2245.

Region of Waterloo Public Health

Healthy Children Info Line

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