

Mealtime Magic happens when you respond to "I'm hungry" and "I'm full."

Your baby can't talk yet but your baby does communicate!

Babies show that they are hungry by:

- getting fussy and then crying
- smacking their lips
- looking excited when food is offered



Babies show that they are full by:

- turning the head away
- closing the lips firmly
- making a face
- losing interest in food and starting to play



Easy clean up makes Mealtime Magic.

Here are some tips to make clean up easier:

- Use a bib. A pocket on the bottom is good for catching food.
- Put newspaper under the chair.
- Relax about a messy face. Clean baby up once, after the meal is over.
- Time for a bath? Feed baby first--and then go right to the tub!



Keep your baby safe at mealtime!

Babies this age can choke easily.

Your baby hasn't learned yet what can be eaten or how much to eat at one time.



Here are some tips for keeping your baby safe at mealtime:

- An adult should always be present when your baby is eating, in case of choking.
- Make sure your baby is sitting up to eat.
- Cut all foods small enough for baby to eat. All pieces should be smaller than a dime.
- Baby can choke on small, hard, round foods. Avoid small pieces of candy, mini-marshmallows, popcorn, nuts, hot dogs, carrot circles, raisins, whole grapes and any other round, hard foods.

I am going to try some Mealtime Magic!
Here's what I will try to make meals easier and more pleasant:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do you have questions about your baby's eating? Ask your WIC staff. They can help you with all your nutrition concerns.



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Mealtime Magic



with your 6 to 12 month old

Are you wishing for mealtimes that are pleasant and easy?

Try some **Mealtime Magic** today!

Mealtime Magic begins when you know what to expect from your baby.

It's important to relax and enjoy feeding your baby!
You can relax more when you know what to expect at mealtime.

Expect babies 6 to 12 months old to eat well:

-  when they have a chance to feed themselves.
-  when they are not forced to eat.
-  when they have enough time to eat.
-  when the person doing the feeding is relaxed.

Expect babies to learn these eating skills between 6 and 12 months:

-  Eating food offered on a spoon.
-  Drinking from a cup.
-  Eating with the fingers.
-  Gumming foods and then learning to chew them.
-  Maybe even eating with a spoon!



Here's how you can help with each new skill:



-  Watch what your baby is trying to do.
-  Give your baby a chance to do it.
-  Let your baby practice doing it, over and over again.
-  Praise your baby for doing it.
-  Watch for the next new thing your baby is trying to do!

10 tips that work like magic!

Enjoy feeding!

Every baby is different, but babies this age usually love to eat! They are growing fast now, so they are hungry and eat well. Relax and connect with your baby at mealtime, especially if you have been apart all day. Make mealtime special.

Give your baby an education!

Feeding time is learning time! Your baby learns with all the senses, exploring the taste, smell, look and feel of foods. Your baby is also learning many new eating skills. Your baby is learning every day, and *you* are your baby's best teacher!



Talk with your baby at feeding time.

Your baby loves one sound the most: the sound of your voice! Your baby loves to hear your voice, so talk about anything at all. Listening to you helps develop the part of your baby's brain that produces speech.

Try veggies at room temperature.

You may not like vegetables at room temperature, but babies do! Try unheated peas, sweet potatoes, cooked carrots, or green beans. In a hurry? Open a can, and mash or dice as needed. How easy!

A high chair makes feeding much easier.

Feeding is easier with a high chair, a booster chair you strap onto a regular chair, or a feeding chair that clips on the counter. These chairs keep the baby and the mess in one place. They also help you sit and feed your baby comfortably. Buy or borrow one today!



Allow enough time for meals.

Meals will take longer when your baby starts self-feeding. Make sure you allow enough time for baby to eat. There is less pressure for baby to hurry if baby eats at the same time you do. Pull the high chair up to the table and let baby enjoy being part of the family.

Offer juice in a cup.

Your baby needs to learn to drink from a cup. "Sippy cups" do not teach how to drink from a cup. Once your baby can drink from the cup, offer all of baby's juice in the cup--about 4 ounces a day. Putting juice in a bottle can cause tooth decay.



Is baby grabbing the spoon?

Does baby grab at the spoon during feeding? Try putting a cracker in each hand and see what happens. It usually works like magic!

Don't worry when your baby refuses a food.



We all have different taste buds. What your baby refuses to eat today might become a favorite food next month. Just keep offering new foods, one at a time, and stay calm if baby doesn't like them all.

Your baby knows how much to eat.

Are you in the habit of making baby take "one more bite"? Relax. You can trust your healthy baby to know when to stop eating. Babies know when they are full. Babies eat different amounts each day depending on how fast they are growing and how active they are.