



Parents decide: **What food is served**
When food is served

Children decide: **Whether or not to eat**
How much to eat

12 Months Old

Tips for your 12 Month Old

Your child's growth has been really amazing over the first year. Once the first birthday has come and gone, the rate of growth will slow down. Most babies almost triple their weight from birth to one year; if they kept growing at that rate they'd all be enormous! Fortunately your child's instinct should be to slowly reduce the amount of food consumed. Your job is to encourage this natural instinct to develop.

Milk

At a year old, formula-fed babies can switch to whole milk. Low fat or nonfat milk is not generally recommended until your child is 2 years old (under some circumstances your pediatrician may advise you to switch to 2% milk). Your baby's brain and nervous system are still developing and they need the extra fat to grow properly. One-year-old breastfed babies will benefit from continuing to nurse, for as long as both mother and baby are happy with the arrangement. At this age, breastfed infants can be quite demanding when they want to nurse; you should be in control of when and where the feedings occur. Whenever you decide the time is right, your child will wean from the breast more easily if you maintain scheduled times to breastfeed from now on rather than a completely demand driven "schedule".

How much?

Most one-year-olds should drink around 16 ounces (2 cups) of whole milk a day (or the equivalent amount of breast milk). It is best to provide the milk in a cup and take away the baby bottles at this time (or provide only water from the bottles).

Hints

Sometimes when you offer milk from a cup a child will refuse to drink any milk at all. Parents may feel forced to put the milk in a bottle to get the child to drink it, some even revert to back to expensive infant formula. You have other choices if your child decides not to drink milk from a cup. You can give him water to drink from whatever container he'll accept and provide these alternatives in his diet:



Cottage cheese, cheese slices, yogurt*, and other dairy foods made with cow's, goat's or sheep's milk. You can add powdered dry milk (or even formula powder) to baby cereal or other baby foods. Soy- and rice-based liquid substitutes for milk (make sure it is vitamin-D and calcium fortified) can also be used. Talk to your pediatrician about what is the best milk alternative for your child.

*Try plain (unsweetened) yogurt mixed with baby pureed fruits such as peaches, pears or unsweetened applesauce instead of Yoplait Go Gurt which contains almost 3 tsp. of sugar per serving.

Calcium?

As your child hits the 1 year mark their calcium needs almost double. Calcium is key for building strong bones, both now and as your child develops into adolescence and adulthood. If a child gets 2 cups (16 ounces) of whole milk a day, they are getting their recommended level of calcium (500 mg for children 1-3 years old).

Juice?

It is far healthier to have your child eat fruit and drink water than it is to drink juice. Children often really like sweet drinks like juice. The concern is that they can take in lots of calories this way (and learn to ignore their natural appetite), and also really increase their risk of cavities.

Developing good habits

Kids thrive on predictability and routine. Habits around eating that don't vary will make feeding more enjoyable for everyone.

Once a child learns to walk, he is less likely to want to be confined in any kind of chair or car seat. Just as you must insist that he stays in his car seat when in the car, you'll find that during mealtimes your child will develop better habits if you teach him that he must stay in one place to eat. Whether you have a high chair or not, if you can be consistent in where food is eaten, you'll have fewer battles later on. As his appetite lessens over time, one way your child will tell you he is done will be to indicate that he doesn't want to stay in the "eating chair" any more. When your child tells you that he wants down, you can let him down and take the food away. It creates an easy way to communicate clearly, even before he has the words to tell you.

Screen Time

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under two years old should never watch TV or videos. Most parents do not follow this recommendation.

If your child will be likely to see TV or watch videos, make sure you choose what he or she will watch, turn it on when it is due to start, and then turn it off again once it is done. This will help you to be more aware of what your child is watching and for how long. Kids who sit in front of TV for long periods have been found to be much more likely to become overweight.

Activity

Most children at this age are very busy exploring their world. They usually love to use their recently acquired skills to get around. Try to make sure that your child has plenty of opportunity to explore in safe surroundings. On a busy day, it might be easy to have your child go from car seat to stroller and back again without any chance to get down on the floor and move. Make sure you schedule some time for physical activity!