

# your plate/my plate

With a little planning, we can eat from the same menus and enjoy the same foods. Just mash or chop mine to make it easy for me to eat.

cheese ravioli with spinach  
green salad with tomatoes  
and cucumbers  
whole grain bread

meatloaf  
mashed potatoes  
steamed carrots  
applesauce

baked chicken  
broccoli and cauliflower  
baked sweet potatoes  
pear slices

You don't need to be a short-order cook. One meal for the whole family is just fine.

Let's try something new:

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Thank you for taking such good care of me! I love you!

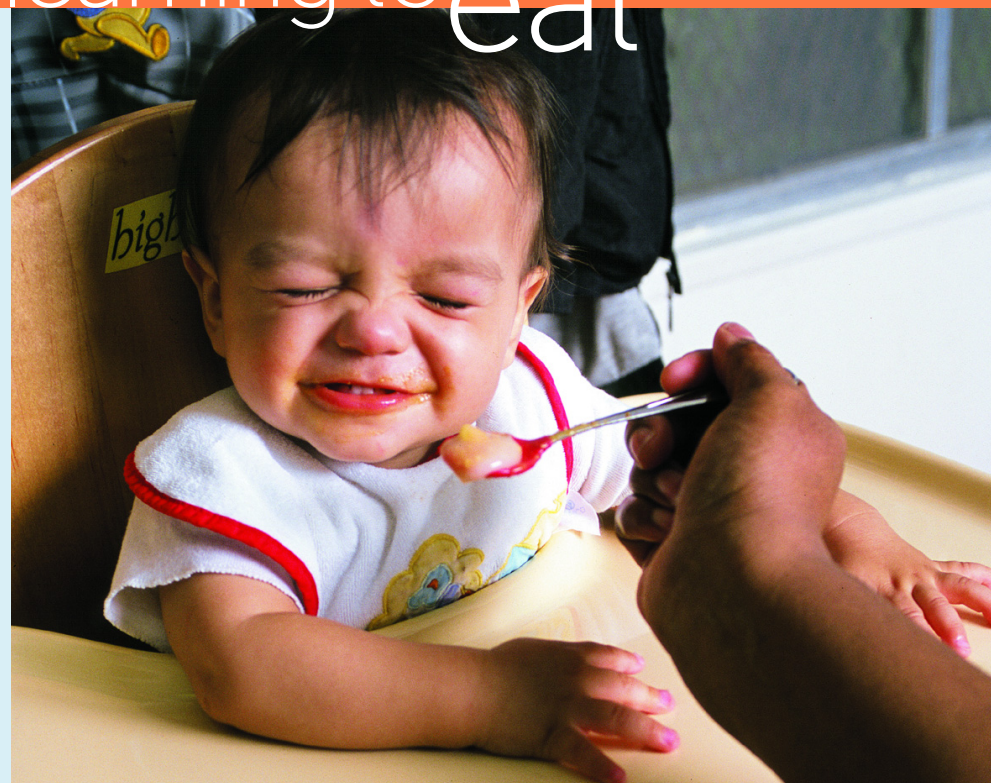


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# learning to eat ages 6-12 months



Hello – It's me, your ever-changing baby!  
At this stage, I am learning to eat lots of new foods. If I say no to a food, don't worry. Try it again another time.

Let's learn from each other about eating and enjoy meals together. You're the best!



## I like to eat with my fingers

- When I'm ready, let me pick up small pieces of food and feed myself.
- Feeding myself develops part of my brain, and it's fun.
- Cut round foods like carrots and grapes into small pieces so they are easy to pick up, but won't cause me to choke.
- It could get messy—good thing I'm easy to wash!

- Offer me small servings. My stomach is little. 1-2 tablespoons is enough to start. I'll decide how much my tummy will hold.
- Give me enough time to eat. Meal time will take longer as I learn to feed myself.
- Eat along with me. Let's enjoy our time together. Talk to me, too. Your voice is my favorite sound in the world.
- Let me say "no" to a food I don't like. Just like you, I don't like the taste of some foods. I will get used to the taste of most foods over the next few years. Just keep offering them to me and let me see you eat them yourself.
- Let me decide how much to eat. I will eat different amounts of food from day to day and meal to meal. feed me healthy food and I'll eat until I'm full.

## Eating with me keeps me safe at mealtime

- I always need an adult with me when I eat or drink, in case I choke. Don't give me small hard, round foods like candy, hot dogs, whole grapes, raisins, popcorn, and nuts.
- I must always sit up when I eat. Feed me in a high chair or booster seat, or on your lap. I love being at the table for family meals.
- Make sure the foods you give me are easy to eat. At first, my vegetables, fruits and meats will be smooth, without lumps. Then I can move on to food with lumps in it. As I get older and learn to chew, all my foods should be cut into small pieces, about pea-size.

## I love to eat!

- I get excited when I'm hungry and it's time to eat.
- I'm growing fast, so I have a good appetite most days.
- I love your company and support when you sit at meals with me.
- Set a good example for me. You are my role model.

## When I'm full, I'll tell you

- I may turn my head away or shake my head "no."
- I may close my mouth firmly or make a face.
- I may lose interest in eating and start to play.

Don't make me take "just one more bite." I can see you want to, but trust me. I know when I'm full!

## Help me use a cup

I am ready to start using a cup at about 6 months of age. You'll have to help me for the first month or two. Then I will learn how to hold the cup myself.

- Let me practice using water so when I spill it's easy to wipe up.
- A 4 oz cup is just my size.
- If you offer me fruit juice, give me 100% juice, and please put it in a cup, not a bottle.

## Microwave caution!

- Foods often heat unevenly in a microwave. Always stir and check the temperature before feeding me.
- Let's not share spoons—you can pass germs to me that cause cavities. Use your own spoon to test my food's temperature.