

# SESSION 3



## Feeding and playing with your 9-12 month old baby



# About this booklet

This booklet supports Session 3 of the INFANT program.

INFANT is a group program about nutrition and play, led by a nurse, health or early years practitioner. It is for parents and caregivers with babies 0-12 months old. Four group sessions are offered when baby is around 3, 6, 9 and 12 months old.



## Acknowledgements

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### **Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians**

In the spirit of reconciliation, the INFANT team acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. The INFANT team at Deakin University is based on the land of the Wadawurrung, Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung people.



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## What to feed your 9-12 month old baby

To help your baby grow strong and healthy, continue to give them **solid food**.



Your baby will need less breastmilk and/or formula now that they are eating more solid food. But **breastmilk and/or formula is still their most important food until they are 12 months old**. It will help your baby stay healthy and grow strong.



and/or



Once your baby is 12 months old, they no longer need formula milk. You can breastfeed for as long as you like.

## Colour every meal with veg & fruit



This will give you energy and keeps you and your baby feeling strong.

### **Keep feeding your baby different healthy foods.**

Add different **vegetables and fruits** in each meal for you and your baby.

Also give your baby other different foods like:

- toast
- rice
- yoghurt
- cheese
- meat
- fish

## Give your baby certain foods to lower their chance of having an allergy.

When you start giving your baby solid food at around 6 months old, start introducing common foods that people's bodies can react to (have an allergy to). Try to introduce all of these 'allergy foods' foods before your child is 12 months old.

Examples of common 'allergy foods' that people's bodies can react to (have an allergy to):



*Peanut butter (and other nut butters)*



*Egg*



*dairy foods*



*Prawns and other shellfish*

Only give your baby one of these foods per day. **Start with very small amounts** and watch your baby closely for a rash or sickness.

### **If your baby *does not* get a rash or sickness:**

Continue to add this food into some of your baby's meals in small amounts. Make the amount a little bit bigger each time.

### **If your baby *does* get a rash or sickness:**

Stop giving your baby the food and go to your doctor.



*These babies have a rash from eating an allergy food and should go to the doctor.*



You can learn more about **introducing allergy foods** to your baby through the 'Allergies' link on the Useful Links page (page 16).

## Foods to avoid giving your 9-12 month old baby

**There are some foods that should be avoided until your baby is 12 months old.**

Your baby's body is not ready for these foods:



*Raw egg and honey (can cause infection in babies before 12 months old)*



*All milks including animal (e.g. cow, goat) and plant-based (e.g. soy, rice, oat, nut milks) should be avoided until 12 months of age. (small amounts in cooking is ok)*



*Added sugar, salt and other additives*

**There are other foods that you should only give your baby sometimes.**

Some foods do not give your baby what they need to grow strong and healthy. You should not give these foods to your baby every day. These foods are called **sometimes foods**.

Some examples of **sometimes foods** are:



*Chocolate*



*Cookies or biscuits*



*Chips or fries*







## Keep your 9-12 month old baby safe from choking - don't give them hard or round foods until they are 3 years old.

  <i>Whole nuts and seeds (instead you can give smooth nut butter)</i>	  <i>Hard foods (e.g. raw apple, raw carrot or hard lollies)</i>	  <i>Sticky foods (e.g. marshmallows and other sticky lollies)</i>	  <i>Round foods (e.g. whole grapes* and popcorn) *Slice grapes into quarters to make them safe.</i>
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## Foods should be soft enough to squash between your fingers.

Grate or cook hard vegetables and fruits (like apple and carrot) until they are soft.

Example:

  No hard vegetables/fruits	  Grated carrot is safer for your baby	  Cooked, soft carrot is safer for your baby
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**Always watch your baby while they are eating to make sure they do not choke.** To learn more about choking and first aid, follow the 'Choking first aid' link on page 16.





## Snack on veg and fruit



### When to feed your 9-12 month old baby

**By 9-12 months old, you can offer your baby solid food first and then breastmilk and/or formula after.**

This helps your baby to get everything they need from iron rich foods before they get too full from breast and/or formula milk.



Eating a wide range of vegetables and fruits is one of the most important things we can do for our health. Vegetables and fruits make great finger food and are perfect for snacks.



## Parents provide, kids decide



### What to do if your baby doesn't want to eat their food

It is normal for your baby not to like some foods straight away. It can take up to 15 tries of a food before your baby learns to like it!

#### **Keep giving your baby these foods to try even if they do not seem to like them.**

This will help your baby to learn to enjoy the food, and eat more healthy foods (like vegetables and fruit) now and later in life.



#### **Let your baby decide whether to eat and how much.**

Offer your baby the food, stay calm and remove their food after 15-20 minutes. Don't pressure or force your baby to eat.

Don't worry if they don't eat much at some meals. They will probably eat more at their next meal!

## **Avoid giving your baby different food if they don't like what is on their plate.**

This can teach your baby that if they keep saying no, they can get the food that they want! Instead, just take the food away and move on to another activity.

## **Let your baby touch and play with their food.**

It's ok to get messy! This can help your baby to learn and enjoy food.

*To help with the mess, you could put some plastic under your baby's high chair or eat outside.*



## **Offer different types of vegetables - raw or cooked in different ways.**

For example, your baby might like cooked mashed carrot, but not grated carrot.



## **Be a healthy role model.**

Show your baby that you enjoy eating healthy foods (like vegetables and fruits). This will help your baby to learn to enjoy healthy foods.

## Tap in to water



## What to give your 9-12 month old baby to drink

**Continue to give your baby water to drink every day.**

Boil water from the tap and let it cool so that it is safe for your baby.

**Keep giving your baby breastmilk and/or formula too.**

It helps your baby stay healthy and strong.



+



**Your baby does not need any other drinks.**

Juice, cordial  
and soft drinks



Animal and  
plant-based milks



Tea and coffee





## Start using a cup instead of a bottle.

If your baby drinks their water, breastmilk and/or formula from a bottle, aim to stop using the bottle by the time they are 12 months old. Instead, you can give them a cup.

Drinking from a cup is an important skill and is better for your baby's teeth. It will also help your baby to drink the amount that they need.



*Straw cup*



*Sippy cup*



*Open cup*

You can start with a **straw cup** or **sippy cup** to help your baby learn how to sip.

You can move on to an **open cup** as soon as possible.



**It is normal if your baby can't use a cup straight away. Drinking from a cup is a learned skill.** Keep practicing!

## Eat together, play together



### How to show your 9-12 month old baby healthy habits

#### **Our babies watch and learn from everything we do.**

Show your baby good habits like eating delicious healthy foods and being active together.

Try to show your baby good examples of healthy habits like:

- eating lots of fruit and vegetables together
- moving your body and being active
- not using your phone too often

#### **Spend time playing together. This helps your baby bond and be closer with you.**

There are many activities you and your baby can do together:

- Dance to music together
- Stack blocks or plastic cups and then knock them down, over and over again
- Play at the playground
- Roll a ball to each other



Try to have some outdoor playtime together every day too!

## Off and running

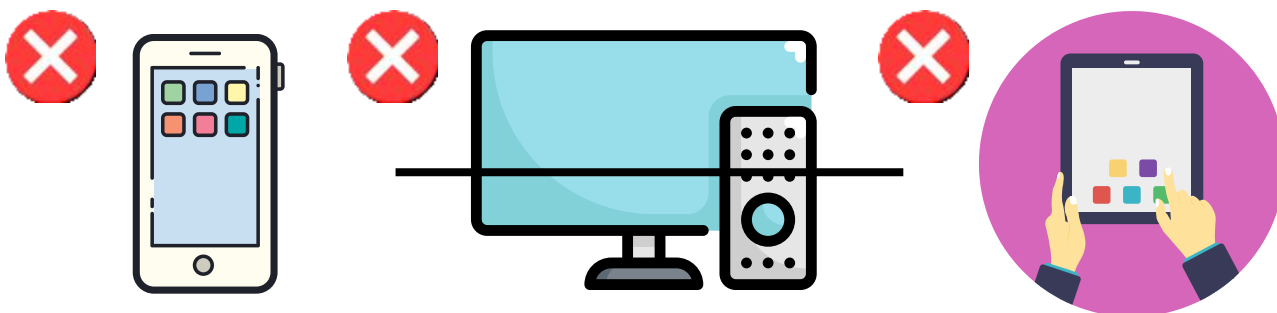


## How to help your 9-12 month old baby to move more

### Avoid phones, TV and other screens.

Screens are not recommended for children under 2 years of age.

Too much screen time can impact your child's brain and body development. Playing games or spending time outside is better for your child to learn and grow.



### Play with your baby often.

Plan some activities that you can do with your baby to help you both stay active, like going for a walk to the park or dancing.

Try to get outside to play every day too.





## Give your child lots of time to move their body.

Give them lots of time to move their bodies. Allow time to play on the floor as much as possible.

This helps them to move their body more, grow stronger and learn new things.



## Limit time spent in the pram, car seat or high-chair.

Try to have your child out of the pram, car seat and highchair as much as you can.

Avoid putting your child in bouncers, activity centres or anywhere that stops them moving around freely.



## Ways to be active and play with your 9-12 month old baby

### Go for a swim at the local pool.

This can help your baby to build strong muscles and relax in the water. It's also a great way for you to bond together!





## **Walk to the local park or playground.**

Walking is a great way for you and your baby to get some fresh air. Your baby will love looking at everything outside!

## **Dance and move to some music together.**

A great way for you to have fun together and move your bodies at the same time.



## **Make a tunnel for your baby to crawl through.**

You could make this out of cardboard boxes or by putting chairs together so that your baby can crawl through the legs. Your baby will have lots of fun crawling and exploring!

## **Play drums.**

You can use pots and pans for your baby to play on. Your baby could use their hands or some spoons to make noise. This helps your baby learn to play on their own and will teach them to start enjoying music!



# Summary

## Feeding and playing with your 9-12 month old baby

- Continue giving your baby **solid foods**. Also continue to give **breastmilk and/or formula as this is still the most important food for your baby** until they are 12 months old. Start giving your baby breastmilk and/or formula in a sippy cup.
- Include **vegetables and fruits** in every meal and snack.
- **Keep offering your baby different types of foods** even if they don't seem to like it.
- **Make mealtimes fun and happy** by eating healthy options together and letting your baby decide if and how much to eat.
- **Play with your baby often** (e.g. go for a swim at the local pool, make a tunnel for them to crawl through, or dance together!)
- Keep play and meal times **screen free** so you and your baby can focus on connecting and learning together
- Set up an area where your baby can safely play and **move freely**; avoid putting your baby in a highchair, pram or activity centre to play



## Useful links

### For more information about feeding and playing with your baby:



#### **My Baby Now app**

The My Baby Now app is full of practical advice, tips and tools to help you feed your baby, and lots of ideas for play! Developed by experts, it is information you can trust.

Scan the QR code to download to your phone:



### For information about other popular topics for parents of babies aged 9-12 months:

#### **Choking first aid**

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/safety/choking-strangulation/choking-first-aid-pictures>

#### **Allergies**

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/health-daily-care/allergy-intolerance>

#### **Developing Literacy**

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/play-learning/literacy-reading-stories/developing-literacy>

#### **Raising bilingual and multilingual children**

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/connecting-communicating/bilingualism-multilingualism/raising-bilingual-children-tips>