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FEEDING GUIDELINES FOR THE FIRST YEAR

Remember – there are two major objectives in setting up your feeding program. First, to do the best job of nourishing your baby, and second, to teach your child healthy eating habits to last the rest of his/her life.

0-6 MONTHS

Breast milk and/or Iron-Fortified Formula are best. For breast-fed babies, the mother should eat a healthy diet (avoiding peanut products) and stay on her prenatal vitamins. It's also a good idea to include ARA & DHA rich foods in mom's diet. Satisfactory sources are ocean fish products, such as salmon twice a week, two fish oil capsules, or two teaspoons of cod liver oil daily. If you choose to use formula, it's a good idea to select one that has been fortified with the essential fatty acids DHA and ARA. Cow's milk formula is preferable to soy formula, as it has a better mix of essential fatty acids. A family history of allergy is not a good reason to choose soy over cow's milk formulas. Both have a nearly equal rate of inducing allergies in an infant. Quite rarely, a baby may have pain, gas and diarrhea due to lactose (milk sugar) intolerance. These children can be given one of the available lactose-free cow milk or soy formulas. Changing formula types usually had no effect on colic or spitting up, but it is OK to try if the parent wishes. A good reason to make a formula change, however, is if a child develops allergy symptoms, such as hives, eczema, wheezing, or swelling of the lips.

Other supplements, which are needed in the first year, are iron, vitamin D and fluoride. Children who do not get enough iron early on can have delays or permanent damage in mental and motor development, while deficient fluoride can cause later problems with tooth decay. Vitamin D is important in helping the bones pick up calcium. For breast-fed infants, it is a good idea to add an iron supplement at two months of age. The easiest way to do both of these supplements together is with an iron-fortified vitamin supplement. For formula-fed babies, there is absolutely no reason to feed a low-iron formula. All children should be getting fluoride by six months of age. Fluoride is discussed below.

Herbal supplements generally are not designed for children, and should be approached with caution. If you decide to give your child an herbal supplement, please bring the bottle to your next well check so we can review the safety of the supplement.

Solids, water, and/or juice are not required, and will not promote sleeping through the night.

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