

# Ideas & Tips for birth to 9 months

## Eat Well

- > Any breastmilk is better than none! It helps your baby fight disease & allergies
- > Watch your baby for feeding cues. They know when they're hungry & full and will let you know too
- > Avoid overfeeding them: if they are fussy, try swaddling, gentle rocking, or soothing sounds

### To introduce new foods between 4-6 months:

- > Wait until your baby can hold their head steady and straight in a high chair or feeding chair
- > Puree or strain a single food, then add breastmilk or formula so foods are thinner at first
- > Add less breastmilk or formula as they learn taste and texture
- > Continue breast or formula feeding along with new foods for the first year

### To decide which foods to serve first:

- > Pureed and strained vegetables: peas, cauliflower, sweet potatoes, broccoli
- > Pureed and strained meat: lean beef, poultry, pork
- > Single ingredient cereals: oats, rice, barley
- > For breastfed babies, use iron-fortified cereals

## Play Together

- > Walk around the house holding your baby, and talk to them about what you see

## Sleep More

### Use calming activities to get ready for rest:

- > Gentle rocking, or helping them find their thumb or pacifier to suck on

### Practice safe sleeping:

- > Use a firm sleep surface that does not change shape when your baby is set down on their back
- > Keep sleep area free of blankets, pillows, bumpers, and other soft objects

# Resources

## Somerville Hub

[somervillehub.org](http://somervillehub.org)

## American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

[healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org)

## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

[mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/basic-needs/food/wic](http://mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/basic-needs/food/wic)

## Somerville Non-Emergency 311 Service Center

Dial 311



**Remember: Not all children are the same!**  
The information here should not take the place of advice from your doctor or health care provider. Ask them for additional information if you have questions, especially about nuts or other food allergies.



**SHAPE UP  
UNDER 5**

Healthy bodies healthy minds  
from birth to 5 years

[ShapeUpUnder5@somervillema.gov](mailto:ShapeUpUnder5@somervillema.gov)

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# Small Steps to Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds

## Birth to 9 months



**Eat Well**  
**Play Together**  
**Sleep More**

## UNTIL 4-6 MONTHS

Your baby only needs:

- ✓ Breastmilk + Vitamin D Supplement and/or
- ✓ Iron-fortified infant formula

Tummies aren't ready for cereals until around 6 months!



## 4-6 TO 9 MONTHS

In addition to formula or breastmilk:

- ✓ Slowly start introducing your baby to pureed foods
- ✓ Explore a variety of foods, especially fruits and vegetables

**Your baby is sweet enough!**  
They don't need juice or other sugary drinks

## UNTIL 6 MONTHS

When your baby is ready:

- ✓ **Tummy time** under your watchful eyes helps them grow stronger
- ✓ **Story time** in your voice helps them learn

## AROUND 6 MONTHS

Play time helps your baby learn!

- ✓ **Create a space** where your baby can play with you
- ✓ **Take a break from the seat.** Let your baby show you how they are ready to move

**Habits form quickly at this age!**

Keep sleeping areas and play time free from screens



## UNTIL 6 WEEKS

Sleep patterns may **vary each day**

## AROUND 6 WEEKS

Sleep may happen **more at night**

## AROUND 3 MONTHS

Sleep may happen **mostly at night**

## 6 TO 9 MONTHS

- ✓ Your baby needs **12-16 hours** of sleep each day
- ✓ Start to use **calming activities** at bedtime

A baby's sleep can change a lot. Let them wake up on their own!

**Your baby sleeps safest on their back!**  
Place them on their back for all naps and at night time



Eat Well

Play Together

Sleep More