

# Feeding your newborn



Humana Healthy Horizons® is here to help you give your baby the best nutrition possible. That way your baby thrives and grows! Here are some tips:

## What to feed your baby

**Breastmilk** is the ideal food for babies (with some rare exceptions). Breastmilk can be given to the baby directly from the breast. You can also pump breastmilk and feed with a bottle. It is recommended to breastfeed within the first hour of a baby's life and continue as often and as much as baby wants. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding exclusively for six months. That means no other food or drinks other than vitamin D. Then you can start adding in healthy foods that are right for their age while you breastfeed for up to 2 years old and beyond.

**Infant formula** should be used when breastfeeding is not possible.

**Vitamin D supplements** help your baby absorb calcium and phosphorus. Ask your baby's doctor if you should add vitamin D to your baby's diet.

**Newborns should not** drink water, juice, cereal or other fluids.

**Humana**  
Healthy Horizons®  
in Kentucky

## When to feed your baby

Watch for the signs your baby is ready to eat.

Early signs:

- Moving hands to the mouth
- Sucking on fists and fingers
- Lip smacking

Later signs:

- Fussiness
- Crying

Feeding your baby during the early signs of hunger makes the process easier for both you and your baby.

Signs your baby is full or needs a break:

- Baby stops sucking
- Baby closes their mouth
- Baby turns away from the nipple or the bottle

Try burping your baby or taking a break before offering more.

## Things to consider:

- How much your baby eats may vary. Babies go through growth spurts and may need more food or may want to eat more often.
- You should expect to breastfeed or pump every 2-3 hours.
- Watch your baby more than the clock. Respond to early signs of hunger!

- Look for:
  - Weight gain
  - Wet diapers: 1 wet diaper on day 1 of life; 3 wet diapers on days 2-3; 4-5 wet diapers on days 4-6; 6-8 wet diapers by day 6 (about 1 wet diaper for each feeding)
  - Bowel movements
- Call the doctor if your baby isn't gaining weight, has too few wet diapers, is not passing stools or does not show interest in eating.
- Your pediatrician will weigh your baby at each visit and ask how much your baby is eating. This will help you know if baby's growth is on track.

## How to feed your baby:

1. If using a breast pump and/or bottles, make sure all equipment is cleaned before each use. Read the instructions for your pump and bottle.
2. Wash your hands before making bottles or feeding your baby
3. Baby's milk does not need to be warmed before feeding, but if you choose to warm your baby's bottle:
  - Never use a microwave. It causes hot spots that can burn your baby's mouth and throat.
  - Place the bottle under running warm water.
  - Test the temperature. Put a few drops on the back of your wrist before giving it to your baby.
4. If feeding infant formula, make sure:
  - It is not expired.
  - The container is sealed and in good condition.
  - It is stored in a cool, dry, indoor place.
  - Once you open the container, use it within one month. Put the date on the lid when you open it.
  - The formula is meant for newborns and not toddlers.
  - The water you mix with the formula is from a safe source.
  - You use the amount of water listed on the instructions.

5. Use quickly or store safely.

- Once you prepare infant formula you must use it within two hours or store in the fridge and use within 24 hours.

HumanaBeginnings™ is here to support you. Please call your care manager with any questions or concerns.

Make sure to make and keep your postpartum visits and to call your OB/GYN, midwife, nurse practitioner, or primary care provider with any concerns.

The year after your baby is born is the postpartum period (some people call it “the fourth trimester”). During this time women experience a lot of changes and challenges, physically and emotionally. Please reach out to the HumanaBeginnings team for support!



**For more information, visit:**

- <https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/learning-breastfeed> →
- <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/infantandtoddlernutrition/formula-feeding/choosing-an-infant-formula.html> →

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