

# FEEDING MILESTONES

*for children birth to three*

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0-3

MONTHS

- Breast or bottle feeding
  - Turns head towards nipple when cheeks are stroked
  - Coordinates suck, swallow, and breathe
  - Demonstrates many reflexes to protect the airway
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3-6

MONTHS

- Breast or bottle feeding
  - Reflexive sucking is replaced by learned motor patterns
  - Oral cavity expands with downward, forward growth of the mandible
  - Beginning hand to mouth play and exploration
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6-9

MONTHS

- Start solid foods if baby has trunk control for independent sitting and head control
  - Introduce purees or use a baby-led weaning approach
  - Emerging tongue lateralization
  - Munching and gnawing develops
  - Lip closure helps propel foods backward
  - Introduce finger feeding
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9-12

MONTHS

- Introduce open cup and straw (can as early as 6 months depending on core strength)
- Chewing includes rotary movements
- Can manage soft cubes (once crawling)
- Self-feeding skills improve

12-15  
MONTHS

- Wean from the bottle
- Introduce self-feeding with spoons
- Eats three meals and two snacks a day
- Change in taste bud perception

15-18  
MONTHS

- Holds cup with 2 hands
- Drinking 4-5 consecutive drinks
- Begins exploring self-feeding with a fork
- Rotary chew emerges
- Active tongue lateralization

18-24  
MONTHS

- Self-feeding is the child's primary way of eating
- Managing most table foods
- Chewing a wide range of foods
- Chews with lips closed

24-36  
MONTHS

- Uses a rotary chew
- Efficient in open cup drinking
- Able to use utensils to self-feed
- Able to eat all table foods

> This resource was created with McKenzie Hoffman  
Follow her @playingatyourplate on Instagram  
for tips and additional information on these topics!

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