

Child Care Food Program Meal Pattern for Infants

To comply with the Child Care Food Program regulations, the Infant Meal Pattern lists the amount of food to be offered to children from birth through the 11th month. Breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula or portions of both must be served for the entire first year. Food within the meal pattern should be the texture and consistency appropriate for the age of the infant and may be served during a span of time consistent with the infant's eating habits. The decision to introduce solid foods should be made in consultation with the child's parents. Providers should receive written instruction on introduction of solid foods from the parent or health care provider. The infant meal must contain each of the following components in the amounts indicated for the appropriate age group in order to qualify for reimbursement.

Infant Meal Pattern Food Components:		Age Group and Serving Size:		
		Birth – 3 months:	4 – 7 months:	8 – 11 months:
Breakfast	Breastmilk ^{1, 2} or infant formula ³	4-6 fl. oz.	4-8 fl. oz.	6-8 fl. oz.
	Vegetable and/or fruit			1-4 Tbsp.
	Infant cereal ³		*0-3 Tbsp.	2-4 Tbsp.
Snack	Breastmilk ^{1, 2} or infant formula ³ or:	4-6 fl. oz.	4-6 fl. oz.	2-4 fl. oz. or:
	Full strength fruit juice			2-4 fl. oz.
	Bread ⁴ or Crackers ⁴			*0-1/2 slice *0-2
Lunch/Supper	Breastmilk ^{1, 2} or infant formula ³ and:	4-6 fl. oz.	4-8 fl. oz.	6-8 fl. oz. and:
	Vegetable and/or fruit		*0-3 Tbsp.	1-4 Tbsp.
	In addition for 8-11 months, you must choose one or more of the following:			
	Infant cereal ³		*0-3 Tbsp.	2-4 Tbsp.
	Meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, or cooked dry beans or peas			1-4 Tbsp.
	Cheese			½ - 2 oz. (weight)
	Cottage cheese			1-4 oz. (volume)
	Cheese food or cheese spread			1-4 oz. (weight)
*NOTE: A SERVING OF THIS COMPONENT IS REQUIRED ONLY WHEN THE INFANT IS DEVELOPMENTALLY READY TO ACCEPT IT.				

1. Breastmilk or formula or portions of both, may be served, however, it is recommended that breastmilk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.
2. For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breastmilk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breastmilk may be offered, with additional breastmilk offered if the infant is still hungry.
3. Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.
4. Bread or crackers must be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

Darker shaded areas are not required for reimbursable infant meals. Lighter shaded areas are required only when the infant is developmentally ready to accept.

Guidelines to Remember

Meals Containing Breastmilk:

- Breastmilk is recommended in place of formula from birth through 11 months.
- For breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum may be offered with additional breastmilk offered if the infant is still hungry.
- Meals containing **only** breastmilk (expressed by mother and fed by child care provider) for infants birth through 7 months are reimbursable.
- Meals containing **only** a combination of breastmilk and iron-fortified formula for infants birth through 7 months are reimbursable.
- Meals served to breastfed infants who are developmentally ready for solids (4 through 7 months) must include at least one food item furnished by the child care provider to count as a reimbursable meal.
- Meals served to breastfed infants 8 through 11 months must include at least one food item furnished by the child care provider to be reimbursable.

Meals Containing Infant Formula:

- Infant formula must be iron-fortified. Cow's milk must not be used for infants less than one year of age. (Refer to the DOH Approved Formula List)
- Meals containing **only** formula supplied by either the child care provider or the parent are reimbursable.
- Meals served to infants who are developmentally ready for solids (4 through 7 months) must include at least one food item furnished by the child care provider to count as a reimbursable meal.
- Meals served to infants 8 through 11 months must include at least one food item furnished by the child care provider to count as a reimbursable meal.

Fruit juice:

- Is creditable only at snack for babies 8 months and older (and can be served instead of breastmilk or formula at snack).
- At breakfast, lunch and supper - cannot count as the vegetable or fruit component.
- Must be full-strength (100%), pasteurized, regular or infant fruit juice.
- Must be naturally high in, or fortified with vitamin C.
- Must be offered from a cup – not a bottle.
- Citrus (orange, tangerine, grapefruit) and pineapple juices served to babies before 6 months of age can cause an allergic reaction.

Solid foods:

- Are required for infants 4 months of age and older who are developmentally ready to accept them.
- Must not be given to babies younger than 4 months of age unless required and documented by a doctor.
- Must be of an appropriate texture and consistency and should only be introduced after consulting with the infant's parent or guardian.
- Can be either home-prepared baby foods or commercially prepared baby foods.
- Infant cereal must be iron-fortified, plain, dry.
- Do not serve honey or food that may contain honey to infants less than one year of age - honey may contain botulinum spores, which can be harmful to infants.