



Babies use signals or cues to let you know when they want to start or stop eating.

Be on the lookout for these cues to help meet your baby's needs quickly. They may give several cues at one time.

When babies *are ready to eat*, they may:

- Move their hands or fists to their mouth
- Make sucking motions or soft noises
- Smack their lips
- Nuzzle against you or search for your breast

When babies *are full* and want to stop eating, they may:

- Release or "fall off" the breast or bottle
- Turn away from the breast or nipple
- Relax their body and open their hands



Keeping your baby's crib near your bed can help you notice feeding cues and get more sleep.

ALSO IN THIS SERIES:

Breastfeeding,
Baby Behavior Crying,
Baby Behavior Sleep,
Room Sharing

Let's Talk – Baby Behavior Feeding Cues

Learning your baby's cues can take practice.

For content resources, visit: dshs.texas.gov/SafeInfantSleep

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Family and Caregiver Common Questions

Is it possible to overfeed my baby?

No, babies who are breastfed usually eat the right amount for their age and weight, especially if you feed them whenever they show signs of hunger.

Babies also use signals to tell when they are full. Look for signs such as your baby releasing or "falling off" the breast or bottle, turning away from the breast or nipple, or relaxing their body and opening their hands.

Feeding my baby more helps my baby sleep better. Is this okay?

Feeding your baby too much by bottle (with either formula or breastmilk) so that they sleep longer is not recommended and may limit their protection against SIDS.

You may have heard that feeding your baby formula will help them sleep through the night, like a "good baby".

It is normal and healthy for your new baby to spend more time in light and active sleep, which helps them to wake easily.

What do I do when my baby wants to feed all the time?

Feed your baby when he or she shows cues of hunger. There may be times when it feels like your baby wants to nurse more often for short periods of time during the day—sometimes every hour. This is called "cluster feeding," and it tends to last only a few days. You can be sure that cluster feeding is okay if your baby is gaining weight and growing well and has some time between feedings when baby is content.

Follow your baby's lead and offer the breast whenever your baby is showing hunger cues. Talk with a lactation consultant or your baby's doctor if you have any concerns about their feeding pattern.

When someone else is feeding your baby, it is important to let your baby set the pace of the feeding.

Scan the QR code to learn more:



Let's Talk - Circle of Support

Continue to share safe infant sleep information with parents and caregivers throughout the first year to increase their use of safe sleep practices!

For content resources, visit:
dshs.texas.gov/SafeInfantSleep