

1-year-old Feeding Milestones and Behaviors

Young toddlers are growing and developing in many exciting ways. Below are some important feeding milestones to look for, behaviors to expect and signs the family may need to talk to the child's doctor.

Important Feeding Milestones

1. Transitions from a bottle to a cup:

- Stops drinking from a baby bottle
- Stops drinking formula (breastfeeding and breastmilk are OK long after the 1st birthday)
- Milk intake is limited to 2 to 3 cups (16 to 24 oz.) a day
- Drinks from an open cup by him/herself, using both hands

2. Self-feeds a variety of foods:

- Self-feeds pre-cut foods, with fingers or a spoon
- Eats at least 1 food from every food group
- Tries new foods (but not always!)
- Accepts different textures, such as smooth yogurt, grainy grits, lumpy oatmeal or cottage cheese, ground meat, ripe fresh fruit (e.g., peaches or bananas), soft vegetables, etc.
- Sits down for 3 meals and 1 to 3 healthy snacks each day, with only water in between

3. Communicates about food:

- Shows hunger, such as pointing to food, or signing or saying "eat" or "water"
- Shows fullness, such as pushing food away, signing or saying "all done," or trying to leave the table
- Shows food preferences and dislikes

Normal behaviors may include:

- Being a "messy eater" (e.g., playing with food and eating with hands)
- Making faces or spitting out foods he/she doesn't like
- Sometimes refusing to try new foods, refusing to eat foods he/she likes or refusing entire meals
- Eating more at some meals and less at other meals
- Asking for food between meals or snacks for reasons other than hunger (e.g., sees something he/she wants, he/she is bored, etc.)
- Asking for the same food over and over again

The family should talk to their child's doctor if:

- ✓ Child continues to prefer pureed or soft foods and has trouble transitioning to table foods
- ✓ Child will eat no foods from 1 or more food groups
- ✓ Child eats fewer than 15 different foods
- ✓ Child becomes upset (crying and screaming) when presented with new foods
- ✓ Child loses feeding skills he/she once had
- ✓ Child gags, coughs or chokes with a variety of foods or drinks
- ✓ Food or drinks leaks out of his/her mouth while eating or drinking