

Healthy Beginnings *Spring 2021*

A quarterly newsletter
for care providers and
the community

To suggest news items or articles, call or e-mail
the MVPN office. Kindly share this newsletter with
families, service providers and community members.
See our website for previous editions.

Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network at The Neighborhood Center, Inc.

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Feeding Babies in their First Two Years

DIETARY GUIDELINES FOR AMERICANS: 2020-2025 (USDA/HHS) www.dietaryguidelines.gov

Chapter 2 Excerpts: BIRTH THROUGH 23 MONTHS

The time from birth until a child's second birthday is a critically important period for proper growth and development. It also is key for establishing healthy dietary patterns that may influence the trajectory of eating behaviors and health throughout the life course. During this period, nutrients critical for brain development and growth must be provided in adequate amounts.

Children in this age group consume small quantities of foods, so it's important to make every bite count!

Key Recommendations

- **For the first 6 months of life, exclusively feed infants human milk.**
- Continue to feed infants human milk through at least the first year of life, and longer if desired.
- Feed infants iron-fortified infant formula during the first year of life when human milk is unavailable.
- Provide infants with supplemental vitamin D beginning soon after birth.
- **At about 6 months**, introduce infants to nutrient-dense complementary foods.
- Introduce infants to potentially allergenic foods along with other complementary foods.
- Encourage infants and toddlers to consume a variety of foods from all food groups. Include foods rich in iron and zinc, particularly for infants fed human milk.
- Avoid foods and beverages with added sugars.
- Limit foods and beverages higher in sodium.
- As infants wean from human milk or infant formula, transition to a healthy dietary pattern.

Human milk feeding alone is the ideal form of nutrition from birth through about age 6 months.

Human milk provides necessary nutrients, protective factors against disease, and other unique immunological benefits. If human milk is unavailable, infants should be fed an iron-fortified commercial infant formula. Once an infant is developmentally ready, foods and beverages should be introduced to complement human milk feeding. These complementary foods and beverages are essential to meet

the nutrient requirements of infants starting at about age 6 months ... toward establishing a healthy dietary pattern and transitioning to a healthy family diet by age 2.

Feed Infants Human Milk for the First 6 Months, If Possible

Exclusive human milk feeding is one of the best ways to start an infant off on the path of lifelong healthy nutrition. Exclusive human milk feeding, commonly referred to as exclusive breastfeeding, refers to an infant consuming only human milk, and not in combination with infant formula and/or complementary foods or beverages (including water), except for medications or vitamin and mineral supplementation.

Human milk can support an infant's nutrient needs for about the first 6 months of life, with the exception of vitamin D and potentially iron. In addition to nutrients, human milk includes bioactive substances and immunologic properties that support infant health and growth and development.

U.S. data show that about 84% of infants born in 2017 were [at any point] fed human milk, with only 25% fed human milk exclusively through age 6 months, and 35% continuing to be fed [some amount of] human milk at age 12 months. Nearly one-quarter were fed some human milk beyond age 12 months, with about 15% of toddlers being fed human milk at age 18 months.

Families may have reasons for not having human milk for their infants ... family may choose not to breastfeed, child may be adopted, mother may be unable to produce a full supply or unable to pump and store milk safely. If human milk is unavailable, infants should be fed an iron-fortified commercial infant formula ... regulated and designed to meet the nutritional needs of infants.

If families do not have sufficient human milk but want to feed their infant human milk, they may obtain pasteurized donor human milk from an accredited human milk bank [that uses screened donors and safety precautions].

<https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/downloads/prepare-store-powered-infant-formula-508.pdf>

https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/healthychildcare/infantfeeding/cleansanitize.html>

<https://www.fda.gov/science-research/pediatrics/use-donor-human-milk>

Feeding Babies in their First Two Years

Introduce Infants to Complementary Foods at About 6 Months Old

At about age 6 months, infants should be introduced to nutrient-dense, developmentally appropriate foods to complement human milk or infant formula.

Some infants may show signs of readiness before 6 months, but introducing complementary foods before age 4 months is not recommended.

Waiting until after 6 months to introduce foods also is not recommended. Starting around that time, complementary foods are necessary to ensure adequate nutrition and exposure to flavors, textures, and different types of foods.

Infants should be given only age and developmentally appropriate foods to help prevent choking.

It is important to introduce potentially allergenic foods along with other complementary foods.

For infants fed human milk, it is particularly important to include complementary foods that are rich in iron and zinc when starting foods.

Developmental Readiness for Beginning Solid Foods

The age at which infants reach different developmental stages will vary. Typically between age 4 and 6 months, infants develop the gross motor, oral, and fine motor skills necessary to begin to eat complementary foods. As an infant's oral skills develop, the thickness and texture of foods can gradually be varied.

Signs that an infant is ready to begin complementary foods include:

- ♦ Being able to control head and neck.
- ♦ Sitting up alone or with support.
- ♦ Bringing objects to the mouth.
- ♦ Trying to grasp small objects, such as toys or food.
- ♦ Swallowing food rather than pushing it out onto the chin.

Infants and young children should be given age- and developmentally appropriate foods to help prevent choking. Foods such as *hot dogs, candy, nuts and seeds, raw carrots, grapes, popcorn, and chunks of peanut butter* are some of the foods that can be a choking risk for young children.

Parents, guardians, and caregivers can decrease choking risks by:

- ♦ Offering foods in the appropriate size, consistency, and shape that can be swallowed easily.
- ♦ Making sure the infant or young child is sitting up in a high chair or other safe, supervised place.
- ♦ Ensuring an adult is supervising the feeding.
- ♦ Not putting infant cereal or other solid foods in an infant's bottle. This could increase the risk of choking and will not make the infant sleep longer.

More information on foods that can present choking hazards is available from USDA at wicworks.fns.usda.gov/resources/reducing-risk-choking-young-children-mealtimes.

Food Allergies: Reducing Risks

Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025, advise introducing most infants to potentially allergenic foods along, starting around age 6 months.

Peanuts, eggs, cow milk products (not drinks), tree nuts, wheat, crustacean shellfish, fish, and soy foods should be introduced when other first foods are started. Introducing peanut-containing foods in the first year reduces the risk that an infant will develop an allergy to peanuts.

For infants at high risk of peanut allergy: If an infant has severe eczema or egg allergy, peanut-containing foods (age appropriate) should be introduced at 4-6 months. This will reduce the risk of developing peanut allergy.

Consult with a healthcare provider before giving peanut-containing foods to these infants. A blood test or skin prick may determine whether peanut foods should be introduced and, if so, the safest way to introduce it.

There is no evidence that longer delaying of allergenic solid foods helps to prevent food allergies. However, cow milk and fortified soy milk should not be introduced until 12 months or later.

More information is available in *Addendum Guidelines for the Prevention of Peanut Allergy in the United States*: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28065278/>

Infants and Toddlers Need Variety to Meet Their Energy and Nutrient Needs

Starting around age 6 months, provide options from all the food groups. Introduce nutrient-dense complementary foods and beverages. Aim for a variety of foods, flavors and textures. Focus on foods rich in iron and zinc — particularly for breastfed infants — meat, fish, beans, fortified cereal.

Since taste preferences develop early in life, avoid feeding infants foods and beverages with added sugars and limit those higher in sodium.

In addition to advice from their health care providers, families can obtain food and nutrition information from their WIC Program (or WIC websites) and through Cornell Cooperative Extension.



For every stage of life - including Pregnancy, Breastfeeding, Infants, Toddlers & Kids - explore the food groups and suggestions offered at <https://www.myplate.gov/>

Local Resources

Tri-County WIC for Women, Infants and Children in Oneida, Herkimer and Madison Counties

WIC's goal is to improve the health and nutrition of moms and kids. It is well known that pregnancy and early childhood are among the most important times for growth and development. Pregnant women, new mothers, and children under age five can use the program to learn more about health and obtain financial support for nutrient dense foods.

Learn more at: wicstrong.com and on Facebook: [tricountywic](https://www.facebook.com/tricountywic)

301 W. Dominick Street Rome, NY 13440 315-356-4755	37 Central Plaza Ilion, NY 13350 315-866-5029
617 South Street Utica, NY 13501 315-798-5066	1072 Northside Shopping Ctr. Oneida, NY 13421 315-363-3210

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION Food and Nutrition Education

Free or low-cost classes for income-eligible families with children and families expecting babies. Learn how to:

- Save \$\$ on grocery bills and stretch your food dollars
- Prepare low-cost quick and healthy meals
- Keep your family healthy by staying active and eating right

Oneida County

121 Second St - Oriskany NY 13424 - 315.736.3394
<http://cceoneida.com/food-nutrition>

Madison County

100 Eaton St - Morrisville NY 13408 - 315.684.3001
<http://madisoncountycce.org/nutrition-wellness>

Herkimer County

5657 State Rt 5 - Herkimer NY 13350 - 315.866.7920
<https://blogs.cornell.edu/cceherkimer/programs/nutrition-programs/>

Mohawk Valley Perinatal Network

announces the

Sacred Women Support Group

A safe space for women to connect, to improve birth outcomes, and to collaborate with organizations that serve women and their families.

Presentations and conversations on health topics include

Birth and Intimacy
Domestic and Sexual Assault
Breastfeeding
Maternal and Infant Mental Health
Infant Safe Sleep
... and more to come

Zoom sessions take place every other week.

For dates and more information, contact

Ana M. Solano, Perinatal Coordinator

anas@neighborhoodctr.org
315-368-7446

or register by going directly to

https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tJcof--vqTsuEtSj0NTT6TBm9H7j_uoMFFKE



- * Promoting, encouraging and educating families and health care professionals about the importance of breastfeeding.
- * Providing accurate information and training to improve the health of women, children, and families.
- * Hosting **BREASTFEEDING CAFÉS** for pregnant and breastfeeding moms to support one another, socialize and receive clinical breastfeeding support. Now offered virtually.

See more at: mvbreastfeedingnetwork.com/
And on Facebook:

Breastfeeding Café by MV Breastfeeding Network

When permitted, in-person CAFÉ sessions will



InsureKidsNow.gov

Now, you have one less thing to worry about.

MVPN Healthy Kids

offer free or low-cost health insurance for kids & teens.

Children can get regular check-ups, immunizations, doctor and dentist visits, hospital care, mental health services, prescriptions and more.

Families of four earning up to \$104,808 may qualify.

Go to **NewFamily.org** or call **315-732-4657**
to learn more about affordable health coverage
for your family.





3 Parkside Court
Building 2
Utica, NY 13501

Our Mission
*To improve birth outcomes and
maternal, child and family health;
and to facilitate community
collaborations and advocacy*

The Neighborhood Center, Inc.

Executive Director *Sandra Soroka*

Assistant Executive Director *Laura Eannace*

Division Director *Patrice VanNortwick*

MV Perinatal Network

Managing Director *Colleen Cavallo*

Perinatal Program Coordinator *Ana Solano*

Community Health Workers (CHW)

Program Director/Supervisor *Michelle Firlit*

Community Health Workers

Elizabeth Angle, Angela Colon, Shirley Farnsworth,

Lul Mohamed, Alexandria Nicotera

Health Insurance Navigators

Program Coordinator *Lynne Gates*

Navigators *Cheryl Burmaster, Beth Dupres,*

Alafia Edmond, Yolanda Henry, Gerda Mortelette,

Deborah Weston, Connie Williams

**NY State of Health
NAVIGATOR PROGRAM**

- ♦ NYS Health Insurance Navigators help individuals, families and small businesses find the right plans for their needs.
 - ♦ Services are free, private and conveniently located.
 - ♦ Language interpretation is available.
- ♦ “MVPN Healthy Kids” offers free or low-cost insurance for kids and teens -- for regular check-ups, immunizations, doctor and dentist visits, hospital care, mental health services, prescriptions and more.

Appointments are held at 3 Parkside Court, Utica and other sites in Oneida and Madison Counties.

Contact us at:

315.732.4657 or **1.877.267.6193** or www.newfamily.org

Funded by the NYS Department of Health

**COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER PROGRAM
Outreach and Home Visiting in Oneida and Herkimer Counties**

Community Health Workers help women of childbearing age to improve their health and the health of their families. CHWs work with women before having babies, during pregnancy, postpartum, or between pregnancies. They educate, refer to services, and follow up to support health and wellness, including help with:

*health insurance • doctors • dentists • baby needs • family planning • nutrition/food resources
counseling • prenatal planning • breastfeeding support • safe infant sleep education
dental health education • quitting
smoking • postpartum support • parenting resources • and more*

Call: 315.737.3474 (Herkimer County) or 315.570.0229 (Oneida County)

www.neighborhoodctr.org/services/child-care-family-services/community-health-worker-services

PERINATAL OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Meetings and Community Collaborations:

- ♦ Healthy Babies Consortium
- ♦ Infant Sleep Coalition
- ♦ Sacred Women Support Group

Trainings for Providers and Consumers:

Infant Safe Sleep • Shaken Baby Syndrome • Safe Haven Law
Healthy Babies Are Worth The Wait • Breastfeeding Essentials
Perinatal Mood • Anxiety Disorders • Cavity-Free Kids

Call: MVPN Perinatal Coordinator 315.732.4657

Funded by the NYS Department of Health

INFANT SAFE SLEEP - CRIBS

Expectant moms and new families may be eligible to receive a Pack 'n Play -- if they have no means to obtain an infant crib or bassinet. The crib program requires an application form, a meeting with a Community Health Worker (CHW) and an education session on Infant Safe Sleep.

Contact:

Perinatal Coordinator 315.732.4657

CHW Supervisor 315.801.5010