

**FIGURE 7.1 WHAT YOUR BABY CAN DO AND HOW AND WHAT TO FEED HIM**

In making feeding decisions for your baby, go by what he can do, not by how old he is. The ages in this figure are given in ranges, and even then		they are ball-park estimates. Your baby is the only one who can really say when he's ready!	
Age	Feeding capabilities	Manner of feeding	Suggested foods
Birth to 6 months	Cuddles Roots for nipple Sucks Swallows liquids	Cuddling and nipple-feeding from breast or bottle	Breastmilk and/or iron-fortified infant formula
5 to 7 months	Sits supported or alone Keeps head straight when sitting Follows food with eyes Opens for spoon Closes lips over spoon Moves semisolid food to back of tongue Swallows semisolids	Spoon-feeding of smooth semisolid food Cuddling and nipple-feeding from breast or bottle	Iron-fortified rice or barley cereal mixed with breastmilk or iron-fortified formula Breastmilk and/or iron-fortified formula
6 to 8 months	Sits alone Keeps food in mouth to munch Pushes food to jaws with tongue Munches, mashes food with up-and-down movement Palms food (palmar grasp) Scrapes food from hand into mouth Drinks from a cup but loses a lot	Spoon-feeding of thicker and lumpier food Finger-feeding of thicker, lumpier food: "If it hangs together, it's a finger food." Cup drinking Cuddling and nipple-feeding from breast or bottle	Well-cooked, mashed, or milled vegetables and fruits Mashed potatoes Sticky rice Wheat-free dry cereal like Cheerios or Corn Chex Breastmilk and/or iron-fortified formula
7 to 10 months	Sits alone easily Bites off food Chews with rotary motion Moves food side-to-side in mouth, pausing with food on the center of the tongue Begins curving lip around cup Palmar changing to pincer grasp (thumb and forefinger)	Finger-feeding of lumpy food and pieces of soft food Cup drinking Cuddling and nipple-feeding from breast or bottle	Chopped cooked vegetables Chopped canned or cooked fruits Cheese Mashed cooked dried beans Strips of bread, toast, tortilla Crackers and dry cereals containing wheat Breastmilk and/or iron-fortified formula
9 to 12 months	Getting better at picking up small pieces of food (pincer grasp) Curves lip around cup Getting better at controlling food in mouth Getting better at chewing	Finger-feeding of soft table foods Drinking by himself from a covered toddler cup Cuddling and nipple-feeding, away from mealtime	Cut-up soft cooked foods Cut-up soft raw food (like bananas or peaches) Tender chopped meats Casseroles with noodles cut up Dry cereal Toast and crackers Eggs and cheese Breastmilk and/or iron-fortified formula
12 months and beyond	Becomes more skillful with hands Finger-feeds Improves chewing Improves cup-drinking Is interested in food Becomes a part of the family with respect to eating	Finger-feeding soft table foods Cup-drinking by himself Nipple-feeding only at snack time, not at mealtime Begins to use spoon	Everything from the family table that is soft Avoid smooth pieces that can choke: whole grapes, hot dog rounds Cut up meat finely All right to change to whole pasteurized milk

Adapted with permission from EM Satter and PB Sharkey. Montana Feeding Relationship Training Package. Madison, Wis.: Ellyn Satter Associates, 1997.

For more information about Ellyn Satter's other books and teaching materials, see [www.ellynsatter.com](http://www.ellynsatter.com) or call 800-808-7976.