

NEW Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns

Infant Meals

USDA recently revised the CACFP meal patterns to ensure children and adults have access to healthy, balanced meals throughout the day. The changes to the infant meal pattern support breastfeeding and the consumption of vegetables and fruit without added sugars. These changes are based on the scientific recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics and stakeholder input. CACFP centers and day care homes must comply with the new meal patterns by October 1, 2017.



New Infant Meal Pattern


Encourage and support breastfeeding:

- * Providers may receive reimbursement for meals when a breastfeeding mother comes to the day care center or home and directly breastfeeds her infant; and
- * Only breastmilk and infant formula are served to infants 0 through 5 month olds.

Developmentally appropriate meals:

- * Two age groups, instead of three: 0 through 5 month olds and 6 through 11 month olds; and
- * Solid foods are gradually introduced around 6 months of age, as developmentally appropriate.

More nutritious meals:

- * Requires a vegetable or fruit, or both, to be served at snack for infants 6 through 11 months old;
- * No longer allows juice or cheese food or cheese spread to be served; and
- * Allows ready-to-eat cereals. 

See a side-by-side comparison of the old and new infant meal patterns on the other side. For more information on the new CACFP meal patterns visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>.

For more information on infant development and nutrition, check out Team Nutrition’s Feeding Infants Guide:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-guide-use-child-nutrition-programs>



Old and New Infant Meal Patterns: Let's Compare

	Old			New	
	0-3 months	4-7 months	8-11 months	0-5 months	6-11 months
Breakfast	4-6 fl oz breastmilk or formula	4-8 fl oz breastmilk or formula 0-3 tbsp infant cereal	6-8 fl oz breastmilk or formula 2-4 tbsp infant cereal 1-4 tbsp vegetable, fruit or both	4-6 fl oz breastmilk or formula	6-8 fl oz breastmilk or formula 0-4 tbsp infant cereal, meat, fish, poultry, whole eggs, cooked dry beans or peas; or 0-2 oz cheese; or 0-4 oz (volume) cottage cheese; or 0-8 oz yogurt; or a combination* 0-2 tbsp vegetable, fruit or both*
Lunch or Supper	4-6 fl oz breastmilk or formula	4-8 fl oz breastmilk or formula 0-3 tbsp infant cereal 0-3 tbsp vegetable, fruit or both	6-8 fl oz breastmilk or formula 2-4 tbsp infant cereal; and/or 1-4 tbsp meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas; or ½-2 oz cheese; or 1-4 oz (volume) cottage cheese; or 1-4 oz (weight) cheese food or cheese spread; or a combination 1-4 tbsp vegetable, fruit or both	4-6 fl oz breastmilk or formula	6-8 fl oz breastmilk or formula 0-4 tbsp infant cereal, meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans or peas; or 0-2 oz cheese; or 0-4 oz (volume) cottage cheese; or 0-8 oz yogurt; or a combination* 0-2 tbsp vegetable, fruit or both*
Snack	4-6 fl oz breastmilk or formula	4-6 fl oz breastmilk or formula	2-4 fl oz breastmilk, formula, or fruit juice 0-½ bread slice or 0-2 crackers	4-6 fl oz breastmilk or formula	2-4 fl oz breastmilk or formula 0-½ bread slice; or 0-2 crackers; or 0-4 tbsp infant cereal or ready-to-eat cereal* 0-2 tbsp vegetable, fruit or both*

*Required when infant is developmentally ready.

All serving sizes are minimum quantities of the food components that are required to be served.