

# Early Intervention and Feeding: When to Seek a Specialist - PART I

## BIRTH-6 MONTHS

Typical Feeding	Atypical Feeding
Breast/bottle feeding average ~30 ozs/day	Grazing all day/night
Efficient coordination Suck Swallow Breath (SSB)	Disorganized suck/SSB; coughing/choking
Age-appropriate growth	Poor weight gain/Failure to Thrive (FTT)
Responsive parenting/Good bonding	Arches, cries, or refuses to feed
Breast/bottle feeding w/added puree ->6 months	Trouble breathing during/after feeding
Reflexes become integrated	>30 minutes to complete feeding
Happy-spitter	Drinks better when asleep
Volume varies at different times in a day	Excessive anterior leakage
Drink more during growth spurts (6-8 weeks, 4 months)	Excessive vomiting



### Take Away Tip for children Birth – 6 months

Infants exclusively breastfed may need supplemental iron ~6 months!

### How can you help?

Encourage breastfeeding and/or bottle feeding 30 ounces per day

## 6 MONTHS-1 YEAR

Typical Feeding	Atypical Feeding
SSB mastered	Difficulty in SSB coordination
~30 ounces Breast Milk (BM)/formula per day	Poor postural control (adaptive seating)
Accept puree food by spoon	Delayed gross/fine motor skills
Begin self-feeding	Persistent gagging/choking
Bottle feeding independently	Drinking <30 ounces per day
Begin soft solid foods (~10 months)	Delayed transition to puree/soft solid foods
Exposure to a variety of healthy foods	Eating only when distracted
Enjoyable mealtimes	Crying/bloating/abdominal distention
Become part of family meal	Excessive agitation/refusal at mealtimes



### Take away tip for infants 6 months-1 year

Purees/soft solid foods should not be a means of nutrition, this should be supplemental to BM/formula!

### How can you help?

- Support breastfeeding/bottle feeding 30 ounces per day
- Embrace exploration/curiosity
- 2 small fun meals per day to introduce variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, carbohydrates
- 1 snack time meal to encourage self-feeding
- Turn off distraction

## 1-2 YEARS

Typical Feeding	Atypical Feeding
Eat soft solid foods	Transition refusal to soft solid foods
Transitions to a cup (~ 15 months)	Prefers less than 10 foods
Explore/eat wider variety of family foods	Drinks >30 ounces BM/formula/milk per day
May prefer favorite foods, but will try new ones	Slow growth/FTT
Neophobia (~18 months) - fear of new	Avoids foods of a specific texture
Increased independence with utensils	Delayed gross/fine motor skills
Can sit/eat in public	Mealtime is a constant battle
Beginning to understand basic social manners	Need tv/IPad/videos/You-Tube to eat
Make simple food choices	Feed child alone/make separate meals
Ask for "more" or "no more"	Stalled eating at a certain level
Mealtime is messy	Delayed oral-motor skills
Constipation/Diarrhea with new foods/milk	Sensory Issues affect feeding transition



### **Take away tips for children 1-2 years old**

Mealtime is messy, children can still eat without teeth, and neophobia is typical!

#### ***How can you help?***

- Decrease liquid to ~12-15 ounces formula/milk per day
- Offer 4-6 ounces of juice/water per day
- Embrace exploration/curiosity
- 10-20 minute mealtimes
- Ignore bad behaviors
- Explore simple manners
- Use simple words or signs
- Use routine/repetition
- Help build trust/connection to mitigate neophobia
- Use adaptive utensils, plates, other equipment necessary for mealtime success

## 2-3 YEARS

Typical Feeding	Atypical Feeding
Decreased appetite	FTT/poor growth and nutrition
Picky eaters	Exclusively breastfeed/drink milk
Use an open/straw cup	Refuse to transition to family meals
Use utensils independently	Persistent gagging/choking on foods
May demand same foods for 1-3 days, then refuse	Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) signs/medication needs
Eat with family	Extreme neophobia
Eat in public for longer time	5-10 foods only
Eat smaller meals	Pocketing/regurgitation
Demand control/routine	Sensory issues predominate feeding (taste, temp, texture)
	Delayed gross/fine/oral-motor skills
	Require distraction to eat



### Take away tips for children 2-3 years old

Most children 2-3 years old do not need the same amount of food as they did birth-2 years old. It's ok to eat smaller meals.

#### *How can you help?*

- 5 little meals instead of 3 meals/2 snacks
- Talk to MD about a multivitamin
- Get Vitamin D outside
- Embrace exploration/curiosity
- Don't get mad!
- Try NOT to add more to a plate
- Decrease chair/sitting time
- No bargaining/bribing
- Ignore bad behaviors
- Use positive reinforcement
- Try not to talk badly about foods
- Turn off distraction and include child in conversation
- Offer healthy choices
- Offer water after meals, not chasing the child around all day with a cup