

What Are Your Baby's Feeding Cues?

What are signs that your baby is ready to eat?

- Stirs, stretches, opens mouth
- Roots, turns head side to side
- Bring hands to mouth, sucks on fingers or soother
- Baby stretches, is awake, alert and looking at you
- Relaxed and molds into adult body when held
- Agitated or crying may be a late cue

What are signs that your baby may not be ready to eat?

- Falls asleep and no longer actively sucking
- Turns head away
- Arches or becomes stiff
- Fingers and toes spread out (splayed)
- Slumps or becomes floppy
- Nostrils flare, knit eyebrows, grimaces, looks worried, eyes wide open or eyes roll back
- Pushes nipple from mouth with tongue or no longer latches
- Gulps or spills milk from lips/mouth
- Coughs, chokes, or works harder to breathe

What can you try if your baby is not ready to eat?

- Watch and wait for baby to show signs of readiness
- Offer a soother
- Give baby a break: hold skin-to-skin, cuddle and talk to your baby
- Adjust how you hold baby: hold baby close or have them sit up more
- Turn baby on his or her side or swaddle for added postural support
- Calm baby before giving bottle
- If problems continue over a few days, try a different bottle and/or nipple



Remember that I am **learning to eat**. It may take me some time to build the skills I need. It is important that I am comfortable and happy when I eat.

Keep an eye on me. Things change fast in my world!

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information, call Health Link at **811**.

This material is for information purposes only. It should not be used in place of medical advice, instruction, or treatment. If you have questions, talk with your doctor or appropriate healthcare provider.