



## ***Starting Cereal***

**When I am about 6-months-old, I will probably be ready to try infant cereal. I need to be able to do most of these things before you start feeding me cereal:**

- Sit up with some support.
- Hold my head up.
- Put my fingers or toys in my mouth.
- Show I want food by opening my mouth.
- Close my lips over the spoon.
- Show I don't want food by turning my head away.
- Keep food in my mouth and swallow it.

**When I'm ready, try feeding me a little bit of infant cereal.**

You can start with infant cereal with iron – try rice, oatmeal or barley. Mix 1 tablespoon of cereal with breast milk or formula – make it thin at first. I may eat only a few bites. When I get better at eating it, you can make it thicker.

Feed me with a baby spoon. Cereal in my bottle can make me choke or gain too much weight – and I need to learn to use a spoon.

Pick a time to feed me when I am happy and interested, like between breast or bottle feedings.



**I need to sit up to eat.**

Hold the spoon near my mouth and wait for me to look at it. Then, put a little bit on my lips so I can taste it.

**Wait until I open my mouth before you try to put food in.**

Wait until I am ready for each bite. When I turn my head away, that means I am done. Don't try to get me to eat more.



**Be patient while I am learning to eat.**

If I won't eat baby cereal, wait a week and try again. I will do better when I am ready. Once I start eating, I will be messy and will want to grab the spoon. Sometimes I will want to hold my own spoon while you feed me.

*Adapted from the California WIC Program.*



**WIC Because  
You Care**

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