

## Developmental Foods Related to Milestones

0-3 Months	
<p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drinks 2-4 ounces every 3-4 hours</li> <li>• Generalized mouthing</li> <li>• Makes vegetative sounds</li> <li>• Uses a suckling then sucking pattern</li> <li>• Tongue flat and cupped</li> <li>• Jaw, tongue and lips do not move independently</li> <li>• Feeding is involuntary and reflexive</li> </ul>	<p><b>Developmentally Appropriate Food:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast/Bottle</li> </ul>
4-6 Months	
<p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeding becomes more voluntary</li> <li>• Infantile reflexes become integrated</li> <li>• Developing a suck-swallow pattern</li> <li>• Jaw, tongue and lips do not move independently</li> <li>• Easy tongue protrusion occurs when swallowing</li> <li>• Cereals and pureed foods are introduced</li> <li>• Takes 9-10 ounces of food or liquid per feeding at 4-6 feedings per day</li> <li>• Uses a primitive, phasic bite and release pattern on a soft cookie (may suck cookie instead of bite)</li> <li>• Munching pattern-tongue moves up and down</li> </ul>	<p><b>Developmentally Appropriate Food:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast/Bottle</li> <li>• Thin baby food Cereals</li> <li>• Slightly Thicker Baby food Cereals+ a thin Baby Food Puree (Stage 1)</li> <li>• Thin Baby Food Purees</li> </ul>
7-9 Months	
<p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lips show lateral closure, closing tightly at the corners</li> <li>• Jaw movements separate from tongue and lip activity</li> <li>• Lower lip pulls in to remove food</li> <li>• Upper lip cleans spoon</li> <li>• Unstable jaw movements with cup</li> <li>• Begins to show coordinated suck-swallow-breathe pattern</li> <li>• Transfers bolus from side to center of tongue and from center to the side—lateralization</li> <li>• Recognizes the spoon visually/tactilely and opens mouth to accept spoon</li> <li>• Swallows some thicker pureed foods with tiny soft lumps and moves to soft table foods</li> <li>• Uses simple tongue protrusion or extension-retraction movements</li> <li>• Can introduce cup drinking—inverted lid</li> <li>• Uses diagonal rotary movements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Developmentally Appropriate Food:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast/Bottle</li> <li>• Thicker Baby food Cereals &amp; Thicker Baby Food Smooth Purees (Stage 2)</li> <li>• Table Food Smooth purees and Soft Mashed Table foods</li> <li>• Food Exploration: Hard Munchables</li> <li>• Meltable Hard Solids</li> </ul>

*Developmental Food Continuum originally developed by Kay A. Toomey, Ph.D., Denver, CO Arvedson, J.C. (2006). Swallowing and feeding in infants and young children. gl Motility online.*

*Retrieved from <http://www.nature.com/gimo/contents/pt1/full/gimo17.html>*

### 10-12 Months

**Skills:**

- Decrease in up-and-down jaw movements when drinking from a cup
- Upper incisors used to clean lower lip
- Lip closure while swallowing liquids and solids is common
- Uses a well-controlled, sustained and graded bite
- Eats coarsely chopped table foods
- With liquids, swallowing follows suck with no pause

**Developmentally Appropriate Food:**

- Breast/Bottle
- Soft Cubes
- Single Texture Soft Mechanical
- Mixed Textures Soft Mechanical

### 13-15 Months

**Skills:**

- Suck-swallow-breath pattern coordinated during long drinking sequences
- Cleaning movements integrated with chewing
- Refining swallowing skills present at 10-12 months
- Phasic bite integrated
- No longer drools except if teething
- Uses smooth and well-coordinated diagonal rotary chewing movements

**Developmentally Appropriate Food:**

- Soft Table foods, cut to appropriate Size/Shape

### 16-18 Months

**Skills:**

- Move from high chair to booster seat
- Movements smoother than at 15 months but otherwise much the same
- Minimal loss of food during chewing
- Uses external jaw stabilization with the rim of the cup
- Can now eat most meats and raw vegetables
- Tongue tip elevation used for swallow with no loss of food
- Chews with mouth closed

**Developmentally Appropriate Food:**

- Hard Mechanicals

### 19-24 Months

**Skills:**

- Transfers food rapidly and skillfully
- Transfers bolus across midline of the tongue
- Excellent coordination of swallowing with breathing pattern
- Drinks from a straw regardless of experience
- No loss of liquid when drinking from a cup
- Able to bite food of various thicknesses
- Tongue cleans lip in free sweeping motion
- Jaw uses appropriate movement to match foods (non-stereotypic, diagonal rotary or circular rotary)

### 25-26 Months

**Skills:**

- Uses tongue to clean the area between gums and cheeks
- Demonstrates oral motor skills to independently eat foods from all food groups
- Demonstrates oral motor skills to drink independently from cup and straw