

Drinks for Weaning

Milk

- > Breastfeeding is good for both you and your baby for as long as you choose to do it.
- > Breast milk will change as your baby develops to adapt to their needs
- > Follow-on formula is not recommended or needed for babies over 6 months old
- > First milk which is a whey based formula is the preferred type of formula until baby is 12 months old
- > Only give your baby cow's milk after 12 months of age, you can introduce cow's milk into cooking from 6 months
- > Semi skimmed milk is only suitable after 2 years of age.

Other Drinks

- > Even though fresh fruit juice is a good source of vitamin C it is acidic and contains natural sugar which may cause tooth decay.
- > Fruit juice can be given in small amounts, diluted (1 part fruit juice, 10 parts water) and at meal times from a cup
- > Water is the most suitable drink in addition to normal feeds, in between meals
- > Try to avoid carbonated or mineral water as it is high in minerals. If your baby is under 6 months of age you should boil and cool tap water before drinking

Cups

- > Tap water should be given from 6 months of age in a cup
- > Drinking from a cup can be messy at first but your baby needs to learn to do this for themselves and to sip not suck
- > Make sure cups are free flowing cups, make sure the water can drip out if tipped upside down
- > Avoid non-spill cups as these encourage your baby to suck and this can indirectly lead to speech problems.
- > When drinking from a bottle the fluid tends to stay in the mouth longer and this can cause dental problems
- > Apart from breast feeding try and have your baby drinking from a cup only, by the time they are 1 year old.

Drinks to avoid

- > Tea and coffee – these contain stimulants and substances which can stop your baby absorbing nutrients. They have no nutritional value
- > Baby fruit and herbal drinks as these are sweetened
- > Goat's and sheep's milk are unsuitable for babies under 12 months and must be pasteurised after this
- > Yoghurt drinks and flavoured milks are not suitable for young children
- > Sugary, no added sugar or diet drinks, energy drinks or fizzy drinks are not advised for babies or toddlers. They have very little nutritional value and can cause them to feel full and therefore not eat well. These are also damaging to teeth.
- > Formula that is soya based should only be used if medically advised. The sugar content of soya can have possible long term side effects such as tooth decay. Other soya based drinks should be avoided before the age of 12 months.