



THE TOP TEN MYTHS ABOUT FEEDING **BUSTED!** young children

MYTH: Babies should eat every 3 hours.

fact: Babies develop healthy eating habits and establish good feeding relationships with their parents when they are allowed to follow their appetites instead of the clock.

MYTH: If a baby nurses often, it means that Mom is not making enough milk.

fact: Babies nurse often during a growth spurt to rev up the milk-making process so they'll have plenty of milk to meet their growth demands.

MYTH: Giving your baby cereal at age 8 weeks will help her sleep through the night.

fact: There is no scientific evidence to back up this claim. However, giving your baby cereal before age 4 months can contribute to allergies and gluten intolerance.

MYTH: Juice is a good substitute for milk.

fact: While juice can fill in for a missing fruit serving for older babies, juice doesn't provide the protein, calcium, and vitamin D that milk has. It should be limited to 4–6 ounces per day.

MYTH: A child needs whole milk until age 5.

fact: As a toddler's growth slows down, he doesn't need the extra fat in whole milk—a switch to lowfat or even skim milk can be made at age 2.

MYTH: Babies should have a very bland diet until at least age 2.

fact: You'll help your child get used to the flavors of food your family typically eats by adding small amounts of spices between ages 8 and 10 months.

MYTH: Being very strict with eating habits will prevent temper tantrums at mealtime.

fact: Setting overly rigid food rules can lead to major food battles. It's better to set appropriate limits—but to be flexible when needed.

MYTH: Kids will eat the food they need only when they get strong encouragement—even if that means bribing with dessert.

fact: In general, kids have good control of their appetites—they eat what they need to grow and thrive. If forced or bribed to eat, kids are taught to override their natural hunger cues.

MYTH: If your baby or toddler doesn't like a food after 3 tries, you should give up—she'll never eat it!

fact: Sometimes it takes up to 15 tries of a new food for a child to like it.

MYTH: A fat baby is a healthy baby.

fact: Although babies tend to be round at birth, they gradually thin out when they become mobile. As kids get older, excess body fat is not a sign of good health—it's a sign that a child is being overfed.



MYTHS and facts

taken from:

Baby Bites

by Bridget Swinney, MS, RD

Available in bookstores nationwide.

