



ORAL MOTOR & FEEDING MILESTONES

6-12 months

6 - 9 months

Summary Skills:

- * Learning to drink from open top cup
- * Puree mastered, soft solids introduced
- * Baby can pick up food and hold for bite
- * Increased rotary chew
- * Tongue beginning to move side to side, not just open and down
- * Can make sounds with lips and tongue

Red Flags

- ▶ Ongoing pacifier dependence
- ▶ Coughing or choking on any consistency
- ▶ Biting utensils and unable to use lips to suck or take bites from spoon
- ▶ Drooling

Mealtime!

Meal time at this stage should be done in a seated, well supported position. Baby's feet should rest flat on a surface while seated. Spoons offered should be soft, flexible and somewhat flat in shape (not a deep bowl or groove that would promote biting. Teaching drinking from open top - use a cup with an insert to control the flow rate and a recessed lid. Use straws that are short (no biting) and always supervise and offer small sips only. Sips cups with soft or hard "spouts" should be avoided.

Skills Checklist

- Feeds self meltable, soft food
- Tongue moves side to side with more precision
- Holds and drinks from bottle
- Uses arms in games such as "So Big", "Peek a Boo" and "Patty Cake"
- Can hold food to bite and self feed soft solids from own hand
- Racks cheerios, scooping with several fingers
- Chewing moving from munch to rotary
- Begins showing interest in objects, reaching, pointing, using gestures.
- Using lips and tongue to make differing sounds: b, p, m, t, d, k, g

Coming Soon

- ▶ Mouth opening matches bite size
- ▶ Continuous sucks or drinks seen from cup

9 - 12 months

Summary Skills:

- * Rotary jaw movement while chewing
- * Can pick up small pieces with finger and thumb
- * More continuous sucks or drinks from cup with ease
- * Holds own spoon
- * Enjoys a variety of texture and flavors

Red Flags

- ▶ Showing aversion to solid foods
- ▶ Ongoing pacifier use
- ▶ Coughing or choking
- ▶ Drooling
- ▶ Wide jaw movements and for bites

Mealtime!

Meal time at this stage should be done in a seated, well supported position. Baby's feet should rest flat on a surface while seated. Baby should enjoy a variety of flavors and textures. Baby should eat with utensils and use them appropriately without having to bite spoon or straw most of the time.

Skills Checklist

- Enjoys eating a variety of tastes and textures
- Rotary chew with no consistent loss out of mouth
- Dry face, no drooling
- No pacifier use
- Can move food from center to side of mouth for chewing without using fingers
- Eats a "regular diet" with using fingers and utensils (modified)
- Can drink from an open top cup with a little support
- Can use a straw
- No suckling on straw, don't see tongue coming out to suckle or cup the straw

Coming Soon

- ▶ Putting food in a bowl
- ▶ Lip closure during swallow
- ▶ Can hold cup with handles while drinking

Family Tree Therapies