

# Increasing Calories in Infants

Feeding can be challenging if your baby is not gaining enough weight or shows little interest in food. It is important to make the most of the

calories and nutrition from your baby's foods at every feeding. Here are some suggestions for increasing calories in your baby's diet.



## INCREASING CALORIES IN INFANTS 4 – 6 MONTHS

- ❖ Offer infant dry cereal mixed with formula at each meal. Fruits and vegetables are lower in calories and should be fed **along with cereal**.
- ❖ Once your baby is eating at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup infant cereal, then you can add an extra scoop of powdered infant formula per  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup serving.
- ❖ Prepare formula or expressed mother's milk with an extra scoop of powdered formula per 8 ounces of prepared formula. Adding this extra scoop of formula will make a 25 calorie/oz formula.
- ❖ Do not feed your infant low-calorie foods such as water or juice. Feed only mother's milk or formula.
- ❖ For the highly distracted infant, feed in a quiet room with the lights dimmed to reduce distractions.
- ❖ Allow at least 2 hours between feedings to be sure your baby is hungry and ready to eat.
- ❖ Keep feeding times no more than 20 – 30 minutes. If feedings take too long, your baby may not be as hungry when the next meal or snack comes along.



## INCREASING CALORIES IN INFANTS 6 – 9 MONTHS OF AGE

- ❖ Add 1 teaspoon melted butter, margarine or oil to each 4-ounce jar of strained vegetables or mixed dinner.
- ❖ Add 1 tablespoon of dry infant cereal to each 4-ounce jar of strained fruit.
- ❖ Try to use higher-calorie strained fruits and vegetables, such as squash, sweet potato, peas, mashed avocado or bananas rather than lower-calorie fruits and vegetables, such as green beans, carrots, pears and peaches. Avoid fruit desserts, since these have empty calories from added sugars.
- ❖ Offer two ingredient dinners, such as simple recipes to avoid added ingredients.

## INCREASING CALORIES IN INFANTS 9 – 12 MONTHS OF AGE

- ❖ Offer whole milk yogurt, such as YoBaby® or LaCreme® brands.
- ❖ If ready for higher textures, mash a boiled potato with high calorie formula and butter or margarine.
- ❖ Try cooked pasta with butter and grated cheese – thin with high calorie formula, as needed.
- ❖ Add strained meat into preferred vegetables to increase protein and calories.
- ❖ Serve solids first – this helps build better appetite. Follow with liquids such as formula or mother's milk.
- ❖ If your baby is finger feeding with Cheerios®, try topping each with yogurt. If taking teething toast, you may also want to try dipping it into yogurt.
- ❖ Offer a sippy cup toward the end of each meal. It may take a couple of month for your baby to learn this skill. Only offer formula, not juice or water in the cup. As your baby approaches 12 months you can offer whole milk. This will make the transition from bottle to whole milk in the cup easier.

