CHILDREN ABOVE 6 MONTHS

Complementary feeding

After 6 months breast milk is not enough. Start your child on other foods in addition to breast milk at 6 months to help them grow well. Continue breast feeding until the child is 2 years.

WHEN PREPARING COMPLEMENTARY FOODS, CONSIDER DIETARY DIVERSITY, HYGIENE, AND FOOD SAFETY.

Ensure that:

- You prepare food from **different food groups** (a child should eat food from 4 or more food groups every day).
- Porridges and mashed foods are prepared in the **right consistency** (they should not be runny/watery).
- You give the child the **right amount** of food according to their age.
- **Make meal times happy** for children. Do not force the baby to eat but be patient and actively encourage your baby to eat.

A CHILD SHOULD EAT AT LEAST 4 OUT OF THE 7 FOOD GROUPS BELOW EACH DAY TO ENABLE THEM TO MEET THEIR NUTRIENT NEEDS.

1. **Grains, white roots and tubers, and plantains:** Maize, millet, rice, potatoes, cassava, sorghum, wheat, and green bananas.
2. **Pulses (beans, peas, lentils), nuts and seeds:** Dried beans, dried peas, green grams, lentils, cowpeas, soya beans, peanuts, simsim and their products.
3. **Dairy products:** Milk, mala, yoghurt, cheese, other milk products.
4. **Flesh foods:** Meat, fish, poultry, organ meats.
5. **Eggs:** Eggs from birds e.g. chicken, duck, turkey, guinea fowl and quail.
6. **Vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables:** Dark green leafy vegetables and orange and yellow fleshed fruits and vegetables e.g. sukuma wiki, spinach, amaranth, nightshade, pumpkin leaves, mrenda, and any edible dark green leaves; carrots, pumpkins, ripe pawpaw, ripe mangoes, beetroots, and butternut etc.
7. **Other fruits and vegetables:** Cabbage, tomato, onion, green pepper (hoho), eggplant, avocado, ripe banana, orange, lemon, guava, pineapple, watermelon etc.

TO MAKE COMPLEMENTARY FOODS ENERGY DENSE :

- Prepare thick porridge (not runny/watery).
- Roast foods such as peanuts, beans and soy before milling into flour.
- Ferment flour from maize, millet, sorghum or cassava before preparing porridge.
- Add small amounts of fat,oil or margarine into the baby's food to improve the absorption of some vitamins and provide extra energy.

If your child is sick, continue breastfeeding and giving small frequent meals. After recovery, increase their food to the required amount.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- **PRACTICE HYGIENE** (hand washing, food preparation utensils, food storage) to prevent diseases such as diarrhoea.
- **SEASONAL FOODS** which are readily available and affordable.
- **USE** fresh ingredients to prepare baby food.
- **THOROUGHLY COOK** food to destroy any bacteria or toxins.
- **COOKED AND LEFTOVER FOOD** should be well covered, kept in a cool dry place and fully reheated before eating.
- **DO NOT** give the child non-nutritive drinks such as tea, coffee, soda and juices with only sugar/flavouring and colour.
- **USE** a small amount of iodised salt for optimum brain development.
- **GIVE** the child clean and safe water every day to satisfy their thirst.
- **DO NOT** use bottles, teats or spouted cups since they are difficult to clean and can cause your baby to become sick.
- **CONTINUE** to take the child to the children's clinic every month for health check-ups, vaccinations and to monitor their growth.

START BY FEEDING THE BABY A SMALL AMOUNT OF FOOD AND CONTINUE TO INCREASE AS THEY GROW.

AT 6 MONTHS

2-3 tablespoons at a time

2 times per day

7-8 MONTHS

½ a cup (250 mls) at a time

3 times per day

9-11 MONTHS

¾ of a cup (250 mls) at a time

3 times a day

Add 1 snack

12-23 MONTHS

1 cup (250mls) at a time

3 times a day

Add 2 snacks

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