

THE WOMEN'S PAGE

Suggestions for Feeding Infants

In considering the great importance of proper food for the early years of childhood, let us notice what Dr. Henry Dwight Chapin says: "The early years and months are biologically speaking the most important ones we live. The growing organism has, at this time, stamped on it the possibilities of future vigorous life or of early degeneration and decay. Biological researches show that favorable embryonic conditions and good nutrition during the earliest years have the greatest influence in determining the full height and development of the individual. If a child is fortunate in its birth, and is well nourished up to the fourth or sixth year, there will probably be a healthy growth thereafter, as, even if there are poor conditions later on, nature will probably be able to compensate and make up for them."

Of course, the very best food for the infant is mother's milk. Cow's milk is the next choice, as it contains all the elements present in mother's milk. It is possible for infants to thrive upon other foods than those containing fresh milk for a time, but never permanently. The long-continued use of other foods as the sole diet is attended with great risk. Milk from a herd is usually preferred, since it varies little from day to day. Milk from a jersey cow is too rich. I found Holstein milk to be the most satisfactory. The milk, however, *must* be modified to resemble mother's milk as nearly as possible. Don't think of feeding a young baby whole milk. Cow's milk has nearly three times as much protein (curd) and salts as mother's milk, so these must be reduced by diluting the milk. Consult your doctor, and he will give you the formulas for preparing the food.

During the first year, besides the milk, fruit juices, broth, beef juice, egg, and

crisp toast, dried bread, or a milk cracker may be given.

Fruit juices should be begun at seven or eight months; some with advantage can take them as early as five or six months. At first, only three or four teaspoonfuls once a day are given; the quantity may be gradually increased until the child is given one ounce twice a day. The best time is about midway between feedings. Orange juice is probably the most convenient. The fruit should be fresh and sweet, and should be strained. The fruit juices help to keep the bowels regular, and promote the general nutrition of the infant. Two or three teaspoonfuls of a soft "coddled" egg may be given at nine or ten months, the amount being gradually increased until half an egg is given, and at one year usually a whole egg. The average child can nibble at a small piece of thin, crisp toast when he is nine or ten months old. Its chief value is in teaching the child to chew his food.

During the second year, five meals are usually required, although some babies will begin as early as nine months to sleep from 6.00 p. m. to 6.00 a. m. without eating. Several changes may now be made in his food. The proportion of milk may be increased; the milk sugar may be omitted; broth may be added to one of the feedings. The child should be weaned. Most children can and should be taught to take their food from the cup or spoon before they are thirteen months old.

Diet for an average healthy child of twelve months:

6.00 a. m.—Milk, six to seven ounces, diluted with barley or oat gruel, two to three ounces; after the thirteenth month, taken from a cup.

7.30 a. m.—Orange juice, one to two ounces.

9.00 a. m.—Milk, two parts, oatmeal or barley gruel, one part; from ten to

twelve ounces in all may be allowed; it should be given from a cup.

12.00—Beef juice, one to two ounces; or the white of one egg, slightly cooked; later, the entire egg; or, mutton or chicken broth, four to six ounces.

Milk and gruel in proportions above given, four to six ounces.

3.00 p. m.—Milk and gruel—four to six ounces.

6.00 p. m.—Same as at 9.00 a. m. If a 10.00 p. m. feeding is required, give same as at 6.00 a. m.

Diet for an average child from the fourteenth to the eighteenth month:

6.00 a. m.—Warm milk, eight to nine ounces given from a cup.

7.30 a. m.—Fruit juice, one to three ounces.

9.00 a. m.—Beef juice, two ounces; and one egg (soft boiled, poached, or coddled); and one small mealy, baked potato; or, broth (mutton or chicken), four ounces; and (if most of the teeth are present) rare scraped beef, at first one teaspoonful gradually increasing to one level tablespoonful; boiled rice cooked five hours), one or two good tablespoonfuls. Crisp dried bread, one piece. No milk.

12.00—Cereal; two good tablespoonfuls of thick porridge of oatmeal, hominy, or wheaten grits, cooked for at least three hours, and not strained; upon this one ounce of thin cream or two ounces of milk, plenty of salt, no sugar. Crisp dry toast or unsweetened zwieback or dried bread, one piece. Warm milk, five to six ounces.

3.00 p. m.—Warm milk, five to six ounces.

6.00 p. m.—Cereal, two or three good tablespoonfuls of farina or cream of wheat; cooked for at least one hour, served as at the noon feeding.

Diet for an average child from the eighteenth month to the end of the sec-

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