

Would my baby benefit from feeding therapy?

Any items listed below are possible concerns regarding your infant's overall feeding success. Please talk with your child's doctor or contact Playabilities directly about any feeding concerns. Early identification is key to having success with your child's feeding development.

Feeding Concerns

Does your baby not usually like to be fed?

Babies show in many ways that they like to be fed. For example, they stay calm and alert during the feedings. They also may look at the person who feeds them while they drink at the breast or from a bottle. If your baby does not seem to like being fed, discuss this with your doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation to deem if feeding therapy would benefit your child.

Do you feed your baby more often than every two hours?

Most babies 2+ months of age eat every 2 to 4 hours. If your baby is hungry every 1 ½ hours or more often, a few things may be going on. First, it may not be easy for your baby to take the amount of food that can help them wait longer between meals.

Second, your baby may not be hungry but enjoys to suck to calm themselves. Third, your baby may just eat smaller meals more often because they are more comfortable than if they eat large amounts all at once. Breastfed babies often eat smaller amounts more often because breast milk is easy to digest. If your baby is eating more often than every two hours, they may not be eating enough to grow well. Talk to your baby's doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation to deem if feeding therapy would benefit your child if you are worried about how often your baby is eating.

Does your baby not let you know when they are hungry?

Babies at this age wake up and show that they are hungry about every 2 to 4 hours. Many babies also cry or fuss when they are hungry. Some babies sleep for longer stretches of up to five hours at night, but they do not sleep through the night. They wake up in the night to eat. If you feel your baby does not let you know that they are hungry, or if you must initiate feeding your baby all the time, talk to your baby's doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation to deem if feeding therapy would benefit your child.



Do you think that your baby does not eat enough?

Babies in the first few days often take ½ to 1 ounce (15 to 30 mls) of breastmilk or formula at a time if using a bottle. By the end of the first month, they often take about 3 to 4 ounces (90 to 120 mls) of breast milk or formula during a feeding if using a bottle. Breastfed babies will feed for 5 to 20 minutes. If they are gaining weight and having 6 to 8 wet diapers per day, they are likely transferring enough breast milk. If you have concerns, talk to your baby's doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation to deem if feeding therapy would benefit your child.

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Does it take more than 30 minutes to feed your baby?

Most babies take between 20 and 30 minutes to finish feeding. This happens whether they are breast fed or drink from a bottle. Yet, some babies take less time, and some take longer. Those who take less than 5 minutes are not eating enough. They may get too tired, or not have enough skill to take more. Babies who take longer than 30 minutes may have trouble eating enough food to finish eating in less than 30 minutes. Make sure you talk with your baby's doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation if you are concerned about the amount of time it takes to feed your baby.

Do you often have to do anything special to help your baby eat?

Most babies do not need any special help to eat from a breast or bottle. But some babies need special things to help them eat well. Babies who are born early and those with medical problems often need help. For example, some need a special bottle and nipple, but you should not have to try several to find one that works. You should also not need to cut the bottle nipples to help the baby eat better. Some parents may add cereal to the bottle to thicken the breast milk or formula, but cereal may be hard for the baby to digest. Some babies need to be held in a special way, like sitting straight up. Some babies need breaks during feeding. Breaks are especially important when a baby has a challenging time managing sucking, swallowing, and breathing. When this happens, let your baby catch up and take a break. Even more important, make sure that you do not jiggle the nipple in his/her mouth to make him/her speed up. Your baby needs to breathe comfortably during feeding. If you find that you must do these types of things to help your baby eat, you should talk with his/her doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation to deem if feeding therapy would benefit your child.

Does your baby not let you know when they are full?

Babies this age show that they are full in different ways. They stop sucking, spit out the nipple, rest happily in your arms, or fall asleep. At this age, your baby should show you in at least one way when he/she is full. Most babies stop eating when they are full. If he/she does not show you clearly when he/she is full, talk to his/her doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation to deem if feeding therapy would benefit your child.

The following information was created based on the work of Feeding Matters. Feeding Matters Infant and Child Feeding Questionnaire. <https://questionnaire.feedingmatters.org/>



Does your baby often do any of the following when you are feeding them?

- Refuses to eat
- Does not swallow
- Turns away from the breast or bottle
- Arches his/her body
- Chokes
- Coughs
- Gags
- Takes loud breathing noises
- Turns blue
- Becomes limp or worn out before the end of feedings
- Falls asleep before the end of feeding
- Vomits after eating
- Pushes foods away from face
- Cries

Feeding should be a fun and joyful experience for both you and your baby. If your baby is often doing any of the items listed above, talk with their doctor to provide a referral for an infant feeding evaluation to deem if feeding therapy would benefit your child.