

# GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR MEETING USDA MEAL PATTERN

FOR INFANTS THROUGH 11 MONTHS

## **Meal Requirements:**

Infant formula is any iron-fortified infant formula intended for dietary use solely as a food for normal, healthy infants served in liquid state at the manufacturer's recommended dilution.

Infant cereal is any iron-fortified dry cereal specifically formulated for and generally recognized as cereal for infants that is routinely mixed with formula prior to consumption.

Crackers must be made from whole grain or enriched meal or flour that is suitable for infant use as a finger food.

Foods shall be of texture and consistency appropriate for the particular age group being served.

Foods shall be served during a span of time consistent with the infants' eating habits.

The child care facility or day care home provider may consult with an infant's parent or caregiver as to the introduction of the optional foods listed in the USDA meal pattern.

Introduction of new foods should be offered one at a time on a gradual basis.

Juice will be offered from a cup only at eight months of age or later when the infant is ready to drink from a cup.

The child care facility or day care home provider must offer at least one iron-fortified formula from the list of approved formulas. If the parent/caregiver prefers to bring another formula, it must be documented in the center/provider files.

Reimbursable meals for infants may contain either breast milk or iron-fortified formula, or both, supplied by the provider/center or by the parent. However, to receive reimbursement, the caregiver must always offer the infant a complete, developmentally appropriate meal. The meal must be served and fed to the infant by the caregiver. A provider/center cannot claim the meal if only breast milk is served by the parent to a child age birth through 3 months.

## CACFP INFANT MEAL PATTERN

### BREAKFAST

Birth through 3 Months	4 through 7 Months	8 through 11 Months
4 to 6 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk	4 to 8 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk 0 to 3 tablespoons infant cereal <sup>2</sup> (optional)	6 to 8 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk, and 2 to 4 tablespoons infant cereal <sup>2</sup> and 1 to 4 tablespoons fruit and/or vegetable

### LUNCH OR SUPPER

Birth through 3 Months	4 through 7 Months	8 through 11 Months
4 to 6 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk	4 to 8 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk 0 to 3 tablespoons infant cereal <sup>2</sup> (optional) 0 to 3 tablespoons fruit and/or vegetable (optional)	6 to 8 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk, and 2 to 4 tablespoons infant cereal <sup>2</sup> and/or 1 to 4 tablespoons lean meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans, or cooked dry peas <sup>5</sup>  or 1/2 to 2 ounces (weight) cheese  or 1 to 4 ounces (volume) cottage cheese,  or 1 to 4 ounces (weight) cheese food, or cheese spread and 1 to 4 tablespoons fruit and/or vegetable

### SUPPLEMENT (Snack)

Birth through 3 Months	4 through 7 Months	8 through 11 Months
4 to 6 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk	4 to 6 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk	2 to 4 fluid ounces formula <sup>1</sup> and/or breast milk, or fruit juice <sup>3</sup>  0 to 1/2 slice of crusty bread <sup>4</sup> (optional) or 0 to 2 crackers (optional)

1 **Formula** served must be iron-fortified infant formula. The formula must be intended as the sole source of food for normal, healthy infants and must be served in the liquid state at the manufacturer's recommended dilution. Menu must indicate that the infant formula served is iron-fortified.

**Note:** Reimbursable meals for infants may contain either breast milk or iron-fortified formula, or both, supplied by the provider/center or by the parent. However, to receive reimbursement, the caregiver must always offer the infant a complete, developmentally appropriate meal. The meal must be served and fed to the infant by the caregiver. A provider/center cannot claim the meal if only breast milk is served by the parent to a child age birth through 3 months.

2 **Infant cereal** must be iron-fortified, dry infant cereal. Infant cereal is often mixed with breast milk, formula, or milk. Menu must indicate that the infant cereal served is iron-fortified.

3 **Fruit juice** must be full-strength. Juice may only be claimed as a supplement component and only given at 8-11 months.

4 **Bread or crackers** must be made from whole grain or enriched meal or flour.

5 **Nuts, seeds, or nut butters** are not allowed as a meat alternate.