

CACFP Infant Meal Pattern Requirements (Birth through 11 Months)

[Child Care Guidance Memorandums](#)

To comply with the CACFP regulations, it is the responsibility of child care centers caring for infants to purchase all required meal components on the Infant Meal Pattern according to the different age groups in care.

The infant meal must contain each of the following components in at least the amounts listed for the appropriate age group in order to qualify for reimbursement. Food within the meal pattern should be the texture and consistency appropriate for the development of the infant and may be served during a span of time consistent with the infant's eating habits; for example, the food items for lunch might be served at two feedings between 12 noon and 2 p.m. Foods should be introduced gradually to infants when developmentally ready and instructed by the parent.

Within the meal chart below, food components marked with “●” MUST be offered to the infant in order to claim reimbursement for that meal. Food components listed under “When developmentally ready” must be offered as part of the meal only when the infant is developmentally ready to accept them.

➤ Refer to the resource [Creditable Infant Foods](#) for foods that can be served as part of a reimbursable meal.

Birth through 3 months	4 through 7 months	8 through 11 months
Breakfast		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} When developmentally ready ❖ 0-3 T infant cereal¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} and ● 1–4 T fruit or vegetable or both and ● 2–4 T infant cereal¹
Lunch/Supper		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} When developmentally ready ❖ 0–3 T infant cereal¹ and/or ❖ 0–3 T fruit or vegetable or both 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6–8 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} and ● 1–4 T fruit or vegetable or both and ● 2–4 T infant cereal¹ and/or meat/meat alternates as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 1–4 T meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas; or ½–2 oz cheese; or 1–4 oz (volume) cottage cheese; or 1–4 oz (weight) cheese food/spread
Snack		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 4–6 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk^{2,3} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2–4 fl oz formula¹ or breast milk,^{2,3} or fruit juice⁴ When developmentally ready ❖ 0–½ slice crusty bread⁵ or 0–2 crackers⁵

¹Infant formula and dry infant cereal must be iron-fortified.

²Breast milk or formula, or portions of both, may be served; however, it is recommended breast milk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.

³For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breast milk may be offered with additional breast milk offered if the infant is still hungry.

⁴Fruit juice must be full-strength.

⁵A serving of this component must be made from whole-grain, enriched meal or flour.

➤ Refer to the [List of Creditable Breads and Crackers for 8-11 Month Old Snacks](#)