



## **Annex A – Summary statements of the Singapore Guidelines for Feeding and Eating in Infants and Young Children**

- 1. Focus on early feeding practices for infants and young children to foster healthy eating behaviours and habits, supporting optimal growth and promoting long-term health.**
  - a. Prioritise the cultivation of healthy eating behaviours and habits.
  - b. Ensuring appropriate growth during this crucial developmental phase.
  - c. Tailored to support appropriate weight gain as early feeding practices and eating habits is directly related to weight gain velocity.
  
- 2. Emphasise positive role-modelling in parents and caregivers to guide the development of healthy eating behaviours.**
  - a. Imitation forms a fundamental pillar of infant learning.
  - b. Frequency and variety of exposure will help in increasing vegetable consumption.
  - c. Adequately preparing and providing healthy food positively has a direct impact on a child's later diet, lipid profile and micronutrient status (especially Vitamin D)
  
- 3. Attain eating habits that encompass children enjoying a variety of food at appropriate mealtimes while exercising autonomy in settings that are developmentally appropriate.**

4 crucial domain areas (VAST):

  - a. **Variety:** Encouraging food variety
  - b. **Autonomy:** Establishing eating autonomy
  - c. **Setting:** Cultivating distraction-free family mealtimes
  - d. **Timing:** Adapting to daytime eating schedules
  
- 4. Ensure a diverse range of age-appropriate textures and flavours to provide an essential balance of nutrition, while emphasising the importance of healthy food preparation.**
  - a. Exclusively breastfeed infants for the first six months of life, and introduce complementary foods when developmentally appropriate, while continuing to breastfeed.
  - b. Between 6 and 12 months, introduce textures progressively into the infant's diet. Start with iron-rich food, preferably green vegetables. Provide early and repeated exposures to a wide variety of vegetables, fruit, carbohydrates, and proteins, without added sugar and salt.
  - c. From 12 months, provide foods that are similar to the rest of the family, focusing on nutrient-dense options.
  - d. In the first two years of life, avoid giving fruit juices and sugar sweetened beverages.

- 5. Be attentive and responsive to hunger and satiety cues from birth. Encourage autonomy in feeding to nurture positive mealtime experience.**
  - a. From birth, respond to infant's hunger and fullness cues, allowing them to set the pace for feeding.
  - b. From six months, respond to infant's readiness to explore new textures and flavours. Encourage self-feeding and food play, allowing the infant to control the pace and determine the amount of food consumed.
  - c. By 12 to 18 months, involve the child in family mealtimes, using age-appropriate utensils. Encourage liquids from a cup instead of the milk bottle.
  - d. Between 18 and 24 months, build confidence for the child to eat and drink independently, using a fork, spoon, and cup.
  
- 6. Establish regular, family-centred mealtimes in a calm and distraction-free environment.**
  - a. From birth, provide a comfortable and soothing environment to promote a secure and nurturing feeding experience.
  - b. From six months, have baby safely seated at a designated dining area while providing solids.
  - c. From 12 months, make mealtimes family-centred to promote social interaction and eating enjoyment with the family.
  - d. Encourage parents and caregivers to interact with infant and child during feeding and eating while avoiding screens and toys.
  
- 7. Encourage a gradual transition from round-the-clock feeding towards eating in the day as the infant approaches their first year.**
  - a. In the first six months, observe and respond to the infant's evolving feeding pattern, recognising their natural shift towards longer intervals between feeds, especially at night.
  - b. From six months, promote the establishment of feeding during the day, recognizing that some infants may sleep 6 hours through the night, and do not need night feeding.
  - c. From 12 to 24 months, maintain a daily routine of 3 meals and 2 snacks, ensuring that meals and milk feeds are synchronised with their waking hours in the daytime.
  - d. Keep each meal duration to 30 minutes, and not longer.

For more details on the guidelines, please visit [www.ams.edu.sg/colleges/CPCHS/home](http://www.ams.edu.sg/colleges/CPCHS/home)