

Early Introduction of Beverages or Solid Foods 411.3

Category	Infants
Risk Level	LOW



Risk Description

Routinely offering foods or beverages that are inappropriate for the infant's stage of development.

At risk if:	Infant is being offered food or beverage (other than breast milk or iron fortified formula) before 6 months of age -OR- Sugar, honey, or syrup is added to any food, beverage or pacifier.
NOT at risk if:	Infant is being fed appropriately for age

Reason for Risk

Feeding solid foods or beverages too early interferes with establishing good eating habits and can contribute to overfeeding. Digestion of solids is inefficient and potentially harmful for infants prior to four months of age. Sweetening agents added to food, beverages or pacifiers can promote the development of childhood caries. Introducing other beverages to an exclusively breastfed infant may reduce the number of times the infant nurses.

Considerations for Assigning Risk

How old is the infant? What are the developmental signs of readiness that this infant demonstrates? What type of food is being offered? How often is the food offered? Why is the food being offered?



Additional Documentation

No special requirements.



Education/Referrals

Provide diet counseling appropriate for participant's concerns.

Example

At Risk

Miralyn is a four-month-old infant who is at WIC to be enrolled. In addition to frequent breastfeeding, she is being fed cereal by spoon one time each day. Miralyn's mother does not feel that Miralyn will get enough to eat without the cereal. Miralyn would qualify for risk 411.3.

Not at risk

April is a one-month-old infant who is at WIC for certification. During the appointment, April's mother shares that April's grandma came for a visit from out of state and gave April a spoon full of cereal while she was babysitting. April's mother does not feed cereal to April and plans to introduce solids at age 6 months. April would **not** qualify for Risk 411.3.