

Introducing Solid Foods

Around 6 months of age, your baby should be ready for solid foods. There are many clues that can tell you whether or not solid foods should be introduced to their diet. At this time, your baby might seem curious about what you're eating. If they can sit with support and hold their head upright, they may be ready for solid food. Another clue is if you find your baby seems hungry even with 8-10 feedings of breast milk or formula a day. Most babies are ready to eat solids when they weigh about 15 pounds and are at least 4 months old. Lastly, it is important that your baby stops using their tongue to push food out of their mouth. If they hold food in their mouth, can move it to the back and swallow, they are ready to eat solid food.



What foods do I feed my baby?

When introducing solid foods, start slowly and build up. A good place to start is with baby cereal. Mix one tablespoon of cereal with 4 or 5 tablespoons of breast milk or formula. After a while you can start mixing in more cereal to make it thicker. Later on you can begin feeding your baby pureed meat, veggies, and fruit, as single ingredient foods. Good foods to start with include pureed sweet potatoes, squash, applesauce, bananas, peaches, and pears. Wait 3 days between new foods to make sure your baby does not react badly to a certain food. This might mean that they are allergic to that food. Around 8-10 months you can add finely chopped finger foods like soft fruits, well-cooked pasta, cheese, and graham crackers. During this time you need to keep feeding your baby breast milk or formula, as this is the best source of nutrition for their first year of life.

There are also foods that you need to avoid during the first number of months. At 6-12 months, avoid honey, corn starch, cow's milk, and soy milk. You also need to watch out for choking hazards. These include small, slippery foods (whole grapes, hard candy, hot dogs), dry foods that are hard to chew (popcorn, raw carrots, nuts), sticky or tough foods (peanut butter, gummy candies, large pieces of meat). Large chunks of food should be shredded or cooked and cut up into pea-sized pieces. This includes veggies, fruits, meats, and cheeses.

How often should my baby be eating?

Your baby should be eating solid food once a day when you first start them on this new diet around 6 months of age. At 7 months, you can increase it to twice a day. At 8 months, your baby should be eating solid food three times a day and their diet should consist of breast milk or formula, iron fortified cereal, yellow, orange, and green veggies, fruit, and small amounts of protein.

How do I know when my baby is full?

When your baby is full, they will lean back in their chair, turn their head away from food, or refuse to open up for the next bite. These are all good signs of when he or she has had enough.