

Food

INTRODUCTION GUIDE



Food INTRODUCTION

- At 6 months of age, most babies are ready to move beyond “tasting” food and are ready to eat 1/4, 1/2 or full jar-sized portions. You can “test” your baby’s readiness for solid foods by using home-made purees.
- Signs that your baby is ready for solid foods (beyond “tastes”):
 - Is able to sit unsupported.
 - Can push food away.
 - Is interested in food.
 - Does not gag on foods or use their tongue to thrust food out of their mouth.
- Signs that your baby is **NOT** ready for solid foods (if this is your baby we recommend waiting 1-2 weeks before trying again)
 - Spits out the spoon with their tongue.
 - Refuses foods or turns head right away. (This is also a sign your baby is full.)
 - Has poor head control.
- I do not recommend introducing rice cereal as a first food. Rice cereal has almost no nutritional value and can be constipating.
- **How to introduce solid foods:** I recommend starting with purees for the first 1-2 feeds with your baby. Purees allow you to assess food readiness. If your baby isn't quite ready for solid foods (see signs above), you can go back to “tastes.” Try again in another week! After the first 1-2 times of feeding your baby you can continue with purees or move on to Baby Led Weaning, which essentially lets babies learn to feed themselves immediately. Rather than pureeing foods, you give your baby food in its “whole” form. Your baby will learn to grasp the food, bring it to their mouth and “gum” or “chew” it. This is helpful for multiple reasons:
 - Your baby controls the rate at which food enters their mouth, which prevents over-feeding
 - Your baby is more able to spit out or gag on food that they feeds themselves, which actually prevents choking (this is often opposite of what you would imagine!)
 - Babies are more excited and engaged in the feeding process, which encourages healthful eating habits. You can give your baby any healthy, soft, non-chokeable food.

Food allergies and SENSITIVITIES

- If your child has a sensitive stomach, has colic, reflux, eczema or allergies I recommend introducing no more than 1 new food at a time. If your child has a food reaction/allergy/sensitivity please inform me at the next well child visit, or immediately if the reaction is severe. Stop the food and wait for all reactions to subside before introducing new foods. If your child seems to react to most or nearly all foods, please let me know. Signs of food reactions are:
 - Rashes around the mouth or anus
 - Diarrhea, blood or mucous in stools
 - Severe gas, bloating, constipation or colic-like symptoms
 - Skin reactions like eczema, rashes, itching or redness, or dark circles under the eyes
 - Change in personality or loss of newly acquired developmental milestone

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Food for **BABY-LED WEANING**

- All food should be soft enough that it is not chokeable.
 - Roasted or steamed vegetables (like broccoli, sweet potato fries with no salt, cooked potato pieces, steamed carrots, broccoli stems, etc.)
 - Chicken meat Homemade turkey or lean beef meatballs (I strongly recommend organic meats)
 - Raw slices or chunks of banana, avocado, peaches, pears, melon, cucumber
 - Cooked quinoa
 - Scrambled egg or scrambled egg yolk. (Egg yolk in particular is high in choline and other nutrients that are excellent for babies.)
 - Cooked beans (delicious if they have been cooked in a broth or soup)
 - Steamed Spinach
 - Beef liver pate (I know this one sounds a little crazy but it's great for them and now is a great time to get their taste buds used to it!)
 - Consider adding sauerkraut juice to different foods to get baby used to acidic tastes
 - And all of the foods on my iron-containing foods list!

Iron-containing **FOODS**

- I highly recommend incorporating iron-containing foods within the first month of solid food introductions. Babies need additional iron at around 6 months - it is very important to include iron containing foods early to prevent iron- deficiency anemia.

◦ Black Beans	◦ Brussel Sprouts	◦ Quinoa
◦ Grass-Fed Beef	◦ Blackstrap Molasses	◦ Beef Liver
◦ Turkey	◦ Lentils	
◦ Grass-Fed Lamb	◦ Split Peas	
◦ Wild Game	◦ Lima Beans	
◦ Swiss Chard	◦ Spinach	
◦ Kale	◦ Prunes	

Foods **NOT TO GIVE** babies:

- Salted foods Honey or corn syrup Shark, swordfish, marlin, or tuna more than once per week (due to high mercury levels) Cheeses made from non-pasteurized milk Sweets like cookies, candies, cakes or soda or juice
- Chokeable foods
- Caffeinated beverages

Drinking from a **CUP**

- I recommend introducing a cup! Let your baby sip water or breastmilk from a cup with help. 1-2 ounces of water with meals can help sensitive tummies digest solid foods better.