



STARTING SOLID FOODS

When can my baby begin solid foods?

- Your baby should be able to sit in a high chair, a feeding seat, or an infant seat with good head control.
- Babies may be ready if they watch you eating, reach for your food, and seem eager to be fed.
- If you offer a spoon of infant cereal, he pushes it out of his mouth with his tongue, that's normal. You may want to wait a week or two and try again.
- Generally, when infants double their birth weight (typically at about 4 months of age).

Which foods should I give my baby first?

Traditionally, **single-grain cereals are introduced first**, on a spoon and not in the bottle. The cereal can be mixed with breastmilk, formula or water. Once your baby learns to eat one food, gradually give him other foods, usually **vegetables before fruits**.

Give your baby **one new food at a time**, repeating the same food for 3-5 days before trying a new food in order to monitor for allergic reactions like skin rash or diarrhea. A few first food examples are: *sweet potatoes, carrots, squash, peas, spinach, peaches, pears, prunes, applesauce, bananas, chicken, turkey*. Remember that bananas and applesauce can **bind stool** and pears and prune can cause **loose stools**. There is no evidence that waiting to introduce allergy-causing foods, such as eggs, dairy, soy, peanuts, or fish, beyond 4 to 6 months of age prevents food allergy. Therefore, as long as these foods are **the right size and consistency (small and soft) for your baby**, feel free to offer them, simply monitoring for any reactions.

Start foods with **1-2 small teaspoons, increasing slowly**. The taste and texture is new and may take some getting used to. Within a few months of starting solid foods, your baby will likely eat up to 2 oz of food at a time, with a variety of foods, such as breast milk, formula, or both; meats, cereal, vegetables, fruits, eggs, and fish. This will increase to **3 meals per day with snacks in between by the time they are about 9 months of age**.

Should I give my baby juice or water?

- Babies do not need juice. Babies younger than 12 months should not be given juice. It has too much sugar and can increase the risk of diabetes later in life.
- Babies under 4 months do not need extra water. Breast milk/formula provide all the fluids they need. However, with the introduction of solid foods, water can be added to your baby's diet, so around 4-6 months you can give ~2 oz of water after feeding solids.

Reminders:

- Baby foods are **IN ADDITION TO** breastmilk or formula, not a replacement.
- **No honey** until after 1 year of age.
- **No cow's milk** until 1 year of age, however, cow's milk products (whole milk yogurt/cheese) is ok.
- When your baby starts eating solid foods, his stools will become more solid and variable in color.