

Introducing Solid Foods to your Baby

Introducing foods into baby's diet can be made easier by following a few simple guidelines. By introducing foods when your baby's body is ready and able to digest them properly will assist in preventing allergies, immune disorders and long-term digestive dysfunction as well as some behavioural issues later in life.

- Avoid the more common foods which cause allergies, such as milk, wheat, eggs, tomatoes and citrus, by leaving their introduction until later in life;
- Introduce foods one at a time so that any allergic reactions can be noted;
- Allergic reactions include hives, rash on the face, mouth, buttocks; eczema; wheezing; runny nose; diarrhoea with increase in temperature; being grizzly or unusually tired;
- When introducing a food, give the baby only one teaspoon the first day, two teaspoons the second day and continue this way gradually increasing the quantity until a full serving is taken. If baby rejects the food or an allergic reaction appears, do not persist. Baby knows best.
- If a reaction occurs, immediately stop the offending food and wait for one week before introducing anything else;
- Keep a record of foods as they are introduced and any reactions for future reference;
- Tolerated foods may be combined at a later date;
- Where possible **use organic produce** to avoid ingestion of chemicals, pesticides, antibiotics and hormones
- **NEVER** add salt, sugar, yeast or vegemite. These can lead to problems such as allergies or addictions later in life. Most adverse reactions are caused by wheat and dairy.

Vegetables

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| 4-6 months | First try carrots, squash, sweet potatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, turnips, white potatoes, eggplant, pumpkin. Try to vary the colour, texture and consistency of the foods. Lightly steam the vegetables and mash. Leave peas and beans until later as these are harder to digest. |
| 18 months | Tomatoes |
| 24 months | Corn |

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| Fruit | 4 – 6 months | Try stewed pears, apricots, prunes, then ripe mashed bananas, remembering that these contain a lot of sugar and should not be given too often. |
| | 12 months | Apples and peaches, raw fruit |
| | 18 months | Citrus |
| | 24 months | Berries |

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| Cereal | 6 months | Single grain variety such as oatmeal, barley or rice. Do not mix the grains |
| | 9 months | Other non-wheat varieties |
| Milk | | The ideal milk for baby is breast milk until at least 12 months. This may be varied by the addition of water or diluted juices from a cup at about 7-9 months. If supplementation has to take place, watch for allergies as noted above. Milk is a food and should not be given as a drink. |
| Meat | 6-9 months | Lamb, veal, then beef and chicken. |
| Fish | 12 months | Start with non-oily white fleshed fish |
| Eggs | 12 months | Start by giving a quarter teaspoon of yolk only three times a week max. Then increase by half a teaspoon at a time until baby can eat the whole yolk without adverse symptoms. Once baby is used to the yolk, give very small amounts of egg white gradually increasing. |
| Nuts | 5 years | Nuts are dangerous for any child under the age of five years as they can be inhaled. Nuts should always be given under close supervision. |
| Chocolate / lollies | | Avoid any products that contain artificial colours, flavours or preservatives. Very small quantities of good quality chocolate may be given on the rare occasion. |
| Soft drinks | | Avoid all fizzy drinks and cordial as these are laden with sugar, artificial sweeteners, artificial colours and flavourings as well as preservatives. Purified, filtered, room temperature water is best. |

NOTE: whenever possible, it is best to use only **organic** produce to avoid dangerous pesticides, herbicides, gases, radiation and other toxic substances.