

SOLID FOOD FEEDING GUIDE

HOW TO START SOLID FOODS:

- Many new parents wonder when their babies should begin eating solid foods. This guide will help you see at a glance the approximate age and order to introduce cereals and other solid foods. These are *GENERAL guidelines* and are not requirements for feeding your baby.
- We recommend **starting solids between 4-6 months of age** when your **baby has good head control**.
- **Introduce one new food every 3-5 days** to allow the child's system to adjust and to watch for any unusual reactions.
- The **best first food** is a **single whole grain iron-fortified baby cereal**
 - ❖ Mix 1-2 teaspoons of dry cereal with enough breast milk or formula to make it like thin gravy
 - ❖ *Use a small spoon* with a long handle and a rubber coating at the feeding tip to serve the cereal. **Do not use a baby bottle to feed cereal** or other solid foods to your baby. A baby needs to experience how foods taste and feel in their mouth.
 - ❖ Babies may make a face and may push the food out of their mouth when a new food is introduced.
 - ❖ Increase the amount and thickness of the cereal once the baby becomes used to the consistency
 - ❖ Feedings will gradually increase to 4 tablespoons of cereal twice a day. **Always make sure the baby is sitting up to eat.**
- when your baby has mastered cereal, offer a few tablespoons of vegetables or fruit in the same meal as a cereal feeding. Start with pureed foods like sweet potatoes, squash, applesauce, bananas, carrots, oatmeal, peaches, and pears. At this stage your baby will press the food against the top of his mouth and then swallow. A serving size is considered ~ 3-5 tablespoons 1-2x daily.
- Some experts recommend introducing yellow fruits and vegetables first because they're easiest to digest, but others advise going green from the start so your baby doesn't develop a preference for the sweeter taste of the yellow foods. It's up to you which route to take. Either way, don't leave any food off his menu simply because you don't like it. And stay away from foods that might cause him/her to choke.
- At First he'll eat semi-liquid cereal mix just once a day. **By around 6-8 months he should be eating solid food three times a day.** A typical day's diet at 8 months might include a combination of:
 - ❖ Breast milk or iron-fortified formula (~24oz per day)
 - ❖ Iron-fortified cereal
 - ❖ Vegetables
 - ❖ Fruit
 - ❖ Protein such as poultry, cottage cheese, tofu, and meat

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Order of Introduction	Breastmilk or Iron fortified Infant Formula	Iron Fortified Cereal	Vegetables/ Fruits	Meats and Alternatives	Dairy and Eggs
Birth- 4 months	Nursing on demand or ~24 to 32 oz formula daily Breast feeding: Start with ~15-25 minutes each breast every 2 to 3 hrs. By 4-6 weeks of age ~10 minutes each breast may be enough Formula: Start with ~2-3 oz every 2-3 hrs. May increase amount/ space out feeds as tolerated	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE
Starting between 4-6 months	Nursing on demand or up to 24-32 oz formula daily	Start with whole grain single ingredient cereal. Try mixed grain cereal only if single grain cereals have been given with no problem. 4 tbsps twice daily	When your baby has mastered cereal, offer a few tablespoons of vegetable and fruits Start with foods like pureed sweet potatoes, squash, applesauce, bananas, carrots, peas, peaches, and pears Serving size approx 3-4 tbsp 1-2x per day	NONE	NONE
6-9 months	Nursing on demand or up to 24-32 oz formula daily May start water in a sippy cup, 4-6 oz per day	Continue with infant cereal, 4 tablespoons 2x daily- may substitute nighttime cereal with meat	Continue with fruits and vegetables 3-5 tbsp 1-2x per day	Pureed or diced cooked meat, tofu or mashed beans. 4-8 tbsps daily	Yogurt and cottage cheese
9-12 months	Nursing on demand or ~ 24 oz formula daily	Try giving table food/ finger foods (puffs are great starter food!) Continue with infant cereal. Introduce bread, rice, and pasta.	Continue with fruits and vegetables. May also give small pieces of diced fruit and veggies. 3-5 tbsps 1-2x per day	Minced or diced cooked meat, tofu or mashed beans. 4-8 tbsps 1-2x per day	Yogurt, cottage cheese, diced cheese, cooked eggs.

****No honey until after 1 year of age **When introducing table foods watch for choking hazards (raw fruits-especially grapes/raw veggies/nuts)**

INFANTS AT RISK FOR DEVELOPING ALLERGIES:

- Exclusive breastfeeding for at least 4 months decreases the incidence of atopic dermatitis, cow's milk allergy and wheezing in early life when compared with feeding infants cow's milk-based formula.
- Solid foods should not be introduced before 4 to 6 months of age. Delaying the introduction of solid foods beyond 4 to 6 months of age does not appear to provide significant protective effect from developing food allergies.