

Introducing Solid Foods

At about 6 months, your baby may be ready to add solid family foods to his diet. Keep breastfeeding, too, until he's 2 years old – or even longer, if you both wish.

Your baby may be ready for solid foods if he can:

- ✓ sit and hold his head up
- ✓ watch a spoon, open his mouth and close his lips around it
- ✓ keep most of his food in his mouth



HOW TO Introduce solid food

- Pick a time when your baby is wide awake and has an appetite, but isn't too hungry. Solids can be offered before or after breastfeeding.
- Sit him up in his feeding chair, facing you.
- Eat with your baby so he can learn by watching you.
- Serve him the same foods as the rest of the family, without added sugar or salt.



DID YOU KNOW

Gagging is a normal reflex babies have to prevent choking. If your baby gags, stay calm and reassure him. If you panic, you may make him afraid to try new foods.



BE AWARE

It's not safe for your baby to have honey in his first year, even if it's pasteurized. It can cause botulism, a serious illness.

First Foods

Iron-rich foods are the best first foods for your baby. Offer them at least twice a day. Foods high in iron include well-cooked meats, cod and halibut, mashed well-cooked egg, lentils, beans, cooked tofu and iron-fortified infant cereal.

Meat

Meat, fish and seafood will be easier for your baby to eat if it's moist and in tiny pieces. Try:

- mixing small bits with water, human milk, mashed vegetables or gravy
- shredding it, or serving it ground up
- using dark meat rather than white-meat chicken
- being sure to take out any bones and shells from fish

Cook whole birds to 82°C (180°F), and all other meat (including game meat, fish and shellfish) until well done – 74°C (165°F). The juices should be clear, with no trace of pink.

Homemade Baby Food

Your baby can eat the same foods your family normally eats. Puréeing isn't necessary, even before he has teeth. Soft foods may be mashed,

ground, minced or pureed. Or try finger foods like small pieces of well-cooked boiled or scrambled egg, tofu, fish, well-cooked vegetables, soft fruits without skins, cooked pasta or grated cheese.



HOW TO

Keep homemade baby food safe

- Wash counters and utensils with soap and water. After preparing raw meat, clean up with 1 teaspoon (5 ml) bleach mixed with 3 cups (750 ml) water.
- Throw out worn cutting boards, which can hide germs.
- Put leftovers in the fridge and use within 2 or 3 days. Or freeze them and use within 2 months.



HOW TO

Use the microwave to safely reheat baby food

- Stir at least once halfway through to ensure even heating.
- Taste the food with your own spoon to ensure it's not too hot before giving it to your baby.
- Don't use the microwave to heat bottles; warm them in hot water instead.
- Glass or ceramic bowls are best. Only use plastic containers or plastic wrap labelled "microwave safe."
- Don't use damaged, stained or smelly containers.