

STARTING SOLIDS

Introducing solid foods is an exciting milestone in your baby's life. With the introduction of solid foods, you begin integrating your infant into the culture of your family. It is also the time when your little one will expand his world of tastes, smells and textures. Some infants will attack food with gusto while others may not be very interested at first and prefer to nurse. But don't worry, eventually they all come around.

We do not recommend exclusive breast feeding after 6 months because there is not enough iron in breast milk to nourish a growing infant. That's one of the reasons that it is important to introduce **nutrient dense foods** right from the beginning that are high in iron. And don't forget that the quality of a mother's milk depends on her diet. She needs these nutrient dense, iron rich foods. See Handout: [Diet for Pregnant and Nursing Mothers](#)

At Pediatric Alternatives we recommend traditional foods for everyone including baby. For more information please check out The Weston A. Price Foundation www.westonaprice.org and look for recipes in [Nourishing Traditions](#) by Sally Fallon.

Here are a few useful guidelines for starting solid foods.

- Between 5 and 6 months start feeding 2-3 tablespoons of pureed food once a day at a time when your baby is happy, alert and a little hungry.
- Try not to introduce too many new things at once. You may want to wait 1-3 days before introducing another new food. Reactions to new foods might include fussiness, rash, gas or spitting up. Though the symptoms may be totally unrelated to the food, stop that food for about two weeks and then try again. If the reaction persists or there is any more severe reaction (hives, vomiting) stop immediately and contact the office.
- When feeding a baby keep a smile on your face and make noises like "mmm" and "yum." Even if baby isn't sure just keep smiling. The next time you try he will probably love it.
- Ideally use only organic, non GMO foods, preferably grown close to home.
- When you start solids the poops will change! They get stinky, brown and thicker so also introduce some water in a sippy cup when you introduce solids. Babies at this age can regulate their own water intake, so just offer and they will take as much as they need. No juice please.
- Start with cooked fruits and vegetables to which you've added traditional fat (butter, ghee, coconut oil, breast milk) and a little sea salt. Raw fruits and vegetables can be hard for baby to digest--the raw pectin can be rough on baby's digestive tract. Best to first cook the fruit or vegetables for baby and mix with the fat while warm.
- DO NOT START WITH GRAINS. Many of us find grains difficult to digest and some babies become constipated and gassy. Start with other foods first, then once all is going well around 8-9 months add whole soaked and sprouted and cooked grains like rice, quinoa, soaked oats or sprouted wheat/spelt.
- Recently, evidence has shown that there is no reason to delay introduction of the highly allergenic foods beyond 4 to 6 months of age. In fact, delaying the introduction of these

foods may **increase** your baby's risk of developing allergies. Highly allergenic foods can be introduced to your baby between 4 and 6 months of age, just as you would introduce any other solid foods.

- Highly allergenic foods that you can feed your baby include dairy products such as cheese, yogurt or cow's milk (we prefer raw milk but St. Benoit or Strauss Organic Cream at the top is OK, too.), egg, wheat, peanut and tree nuts in a form of butter or paste (not whole peanuts or tree nuts due to aspiration risk); and fish and shellfish.
- You should introduce highly allergenic foods to your baby after other solid foods have been fed and tolerated, and with the first taste being at home. If no reaction occurs, then you can gradually increase the amount at a rate of one new food every 3 days.
- Egg are brain food and excellent for young babies. **Recommendations have changed.** It's OK to feed the whole egg, yolk and white, to your baby as early as 5-6 months.
- Families with a history of gluten sensitivity may want to introduce gluten containing grains in small amounts between 5-8 months to improve chances of tolerance.
- Do not introduce honey until one year. However, grade B (less refined) organic maple syrup is a great sweetener for babies.

Here are are few tips to stay on top of food preparation and some recipes to get you started.

For an excellent cookbook on feeding babies see [Super Nutrition for Babies: The Right Way to Feed Your Baby for Optimal Health](#) by Katherine Erlich and Kelly Genzlinger

- Make food ahead and freeze in ice cube trays.
- Pureed foods can be thinned with breast milk, water, or bone broth
- Keep your pantry stocked with bone broth and traditional fats like ghee, coconut oil butter and olive oil.
- Introduce bone broth in a cup/sippy cup around 6 months, and cook the veggies and meat they eat in broth. See Handout: Bone Broth
- Introduce sauerkraut and other fermented foods around 6 months. They will love it!
- Food cooked at home is always more nutritious than organic baby foods. However, any food can be made more **nutrient dense** with a pinch of sea salt and a little bone broth and traditional fat like butter, ghee, coconut oil, olive oil, egg yolk, breast milk, cold pressed olive oil. An occasional jar of organic baby food is OK; just add a little bone broth and ghee.
- Make food that everyone in the family can eat including baby. After a few months special baby food is generally not needed.
- **Fruits for babies:** Pears, apricots, apples, prunes, cherries, bananas, grapes, apples, blueberries, nectarines, peaches, papaya, mango. Be observant when introducing citrus fruits, seeded berries and pineapple as some babies get rashy.
- **Vegetables for babies:** Carrots, squash, sweet potatoes or yams, cauliflower, broccoli, string beans, peas, avocado, Lima beans, potato, asparagus, chard, beets (beware of red poop). Tomatoes come a little later.

Remember, we have lots of time until it is actually necessary that a child consume all of her calories from solid foods. To provide the remaining calories to a growing child with a developing brain we recommend that children continue to drink milk until the age of two, preferably breast milk, raw cow milk and/or or raw goat milk.

Recipes

Cooked Fruit Puree

Peel and core a fresh apple or pear or peach.

Cook until soft.

Add a pinch of sea salt and a teaspoon of coconut oil.

Cool and puree.

Sweet Potatoes for Everyone

Bake whole sweet potatoes

For you: Add butter, creme fraiche, sea salt and maple syrup. Mash.

For the baby: Add a pinch of sea salt, coconut oil and breast milk. Puree

Broccoli Puree

Steam a head of broccoli.

Puree in blender or food processor with 3 medium or hard cooked egg yolks, a tablespoon of coconut oil and sea salt to taste.

Freeze in ice cube trays.

Soft Boiled Eggs

To make an egg with a soft yolk, boil for 3 ½ minutes. Peel and mash mash. Most babies do fine with egg but a few will vomit. If this happens just wait a few months and try again. Most outgrow this tendency.

Baby Pate'

Liver can be added to the diet after six months to supplement the infant's stores of iron.

Boil organic chicken livers in a small amount of bone broth. Cool.

Puree livers and broth in the blender. Sea salt to taste.

If you have already introduced eggs you can blend in one hard boiled egg into the pate'.

Freeze in ice cube trays

1-2 tsp per day is sufficient for an infant.

Bon appetit.

Recommended reading:

[French Kids Eating Everything](#) by Karen Le Billon,

[Child of Mine](#) by Eilyn Satter

[Picky Eating Solutions](#) by Betsy Hick

Super Nutrition for Babies: The Right Way to Feed Your Baby for Optimal Health by Katherine Erlich and Kelly Genzlinger
www.foodwifery.com