

STARTING SOLIDS

Introducing solid foods is an exciting milestone in your baby's life. Feeding your baby until now has been a rather private activity between you and your child. Now, with the introduction of solid foods, you begin integrating your infant into the culture of your family. It is also the time when your infant will expand his world of tastes, smells and textures. Like every other aspect of our humanness, these senses are unique and individual to each of us. Some infants will attack food with gusto waiting for you to introduce the pesto and sushi while others just don't understand what all the fuss is about. These babies might only want the breast for a few more months. Since a baby is actually getting everything he needs in breast milk or formula, no need to worry if only a few bites are taken at first. In fact, if an infant had nothing but breast milk for the first year of life, all would be OK. However, the quality of a mother's milk depends on her diet so make sure that mom has adequate nutrient dense foods to support her health plus that of the baby. So you see, there is not one way to begin to feed an infant and each child will respond in his or her unique way.

Here are a few useful guidelines for starting solid foods.

- Start feeding solids once a day. Choose a time when your baby is happy, alert and a little hungry.
- When you start solids the poops will change! They get stinky, brown and thicker.
- DO NOT START WITH GRAINS. (NO rice cereal!). Many of us find grains difficult to digest and babies become constipated and gassy. We wait until 10-12 months.
- Use only organic, non GMO foods, preferable grown close to home. Shop farmers' markets when possible.
- If we can eat a food raw then an infant can also eat it raw. For example, a raw apple can be pureed in a blender and spoon fed or it can be placed into a mesh bag for gnawing.

Recipe: Peel and core a fresh apple or pear or peach etc..
Add a pinch of sea salt and a teaspoon of coconut oil. Puree.

- Wait 3-4 days between new foods so that you can watch for any unusual reactions. These might include a change in mood, a rash, gassiness or spitting up. Though the symptoms may be totally unrelated to the food, stop the food for about two weeks and reintroduce.
- Make food ahead and freeze in ice cube trays.
- Pureed foods can be thinned with breast milk, water, formula or bone broth
- Keep it simple. If your life only allows for jars of baby food, don't worry. Organic baby foods are good quality and well prepared. However, if you do have time, food prepared at home is always more nutritious. Less processing and an infusion of love make a difference.

Recipe: Bake whole sweet potatoes for the family.
For you: add butter, creme fraiche, sea salt and maple syrup.
For the baby: mash with a pinch of sea salt, coconut oil and breast milk.

- If you start solids and you find that your baby doesn't really seem interested, don't worry. Stop and try again in a few days.
- Do not introduce honey until one year. However, grade B organic maple syrup is a great sweetener for babies.
- Remember that that any food can be made more **nutrient dense** with a pinch of sea salt and a little fat.
- Good fats for babies are: Organic flax oil, Ghee, clarified butter, coconut oil, olive oil

- Avoid all nuts
- You may start full-fat, cow or goat yogurt or creme fraiche at 9-10 months.
- **Fruits:** Pears, apricots, kiwi, apples, prunes, cherries, bananas, grapes, apples, blueberries, nectarines, peaches, papaya, mango. It is best to avoid citrus, seeded berries and pineapple.
- **Vegetables:** Carrots, squash, sweet potatoes or yams, cauliflower, broccoli, Jerusalem artichoke, string beans, cabbage, peas, avocado, Lima beans, potato, asparagus, chard, beets (beware of red poop) and turnips. Tomatoes come later.
 - Recipe:** 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.
- Liver can be added to the diet after six months to supplement the infant's stores of iron.
 - Recipe:** Boil organic chicken livers in a small amount of bone broth. Cool. Puree livers and broth in the blender. Sea salt to taste.
1-2 tsp per day is sufficient for an infant

Remember, we have lots of time until it is actually necessary that a child consume all of her calories from solid foods. We believe that a growing child with a developing brain needs some kind of milk until the age of two preferably human breast milk, raw cow milk or raw goat milk. So, we actually have two years to get a toddler's diet fully up and running. We have two whole years to mold, influence, and challenge a child's attitude about eating.

So have fun, explore and relax.

Bon appetite.