

Introducing Solid Foods to Your Baby

BREASTFEEDING:

- Breast milk is all your baby needs for the first 6 months.
- Continue breastfeeding for 2 years or longer.
- The longer you breastfeed, the more benefits for you and your baby.
- Breast milk provides important nutrients and immune protection.



YOUR BABY IS READY FOR SOLID FOODS:

When she is around 6 months and can regularly:

- Hold her head up steadily.
- Sit up and lean forward.
- Pick up food and try to put it in her mouth.
- Open her mouth wide when you offer food.

FOODS TO START WITH:

Iron-rich foods like:

- Soft-cooked pureed, mashed or finely chopped beef, chicken or pork.
- Iron-fortified infant cereals mixed with breastmilk.
- Introduce vegetables, fruit and whole grains once baby is eating iron-rich foods every day.
- Offer a variety of textures to help your baby learn to chew.
- Offer soft, minced, mashed, lumpy or grated pieces of food, as well as finger foods.



INTRODUCING SOLID FOODS:

Try these tips:

- Include baby at family mealtimes.



- Put baby in a high chair and always do up the straps.
- Put a small amount of food on the tip of a small spoon. Wait until she opens her mouth before you put the spoon in.
- When your baby reaches for the spoon, let her start to feed herself.
- Allow your baby to explore foods with her fists and fingers. Let her make a mess.
- Focus on your baby when she is eating to help prevent choking.
- Start slowly and work towards offering solid foods 3 to 5 times per day.
- Your baby will tell you she has had enough turning her head away or keeping her mouth shut.

POSSIBLE RISKS TO YOUR BABY OF STARTING SOLID FOODS TOO EARLY:

- May not get enough breast milk needed for growth and development.
- Digestive system and kidneys may not be developed enough for solids.
- May choke if not developmentally ready for solid foods.
- May increase the risk of being overweight and obese in childhood.



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