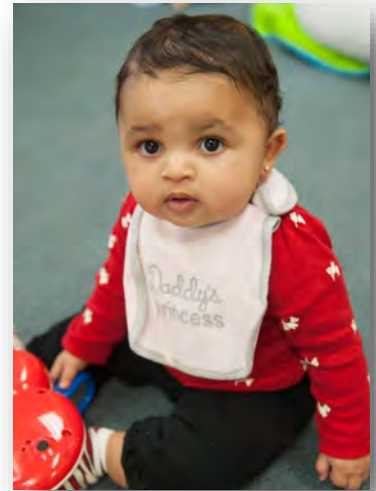


Starting Solid Foods with Your Baby

WHEN is my baby ready for solid food?

Most babies are ready to eat solid food when they are about 6 months old. Look for these signs to help you know. Your baby may be ready for food when she:

- Sits up on her own.
- Can hold her head steady.
- Puts fingers or toys in her mouth.
- Opens her mouth upon seeing food.



WHAT do I feed my baby?

There is no one best food to give to your baby first. Start with a single-ingredient food that has a thin, smooth texture (puree). Homemade and store-bought baby food are both good choices. **Some good first foods to offer your baby include:**



Pureed protein

Go for beef, chicken, turkey, beans, lentils or eggs. These are all great sources of iron and protein for baby.



Pureed vegetables & fruits

Try peas, green beans, zucchini, sweet potato, or winter squash. Bananas, apples, pears, avocado, and peaches are baby favorites.



Iron-fortified baby cereal

Try oat, rice or wheat cereals. Mix with enough breast milk or formula to make it thin and smooth.



HOW do I feed my baby?

Put a little bit of the food on a small spoon and put it near your baby's mouth. Let the baby guide you. When he opens his mouth, place the spoon gently on his lips and let him taste it. When he turns his head away, that usually means he is done.

Some first food reminders:

Wait 3-5 days between each new food. Watch for signs of allergies, such as trouble breathing, rash, or hives.

Always **serve solid foods with a spoon**. Putting cereal in a bottle can cause choking.



Once they start eating solids, **keep feeding** your baby breast milk or infant formula until they are at least one year old.

Here's what else your baby wants you to know:

"Keep giving me foods I didn't like the first time."

Even if your baby does not seem to like a food at first, **keep offering** it. Many babies need to try a food 10 or more times before they like it.

"I'm not old enough yet!"

Wait until your baby is 12 months old before you give them whole cow's milk, 100% juice and honey.



"Sit with me!"

Start a mealtime routine. Set aside time to sit and enjoy meals and snacks with your baby.

"Don't feed me foods I could choke on."

Keep foods like grapes, hot dogs, nuts, popcorn, raisins, raw vegetables, and candy out of your baby's reach.