

Introducing solid foods

When do I start to give my baby solid foods?

By 6 months of age your baby may be ready for solid foods if he/she:

- can sit up with very little help and has good control of his/her neck muscles
- can hold food in his/her mouth without pushing it out on his/her tongue right away
- opens his/her mouth when food is offered
- shows interest in food when others are eating
- can turn his/her head to refuse food

Giving baby solid foods too early can cause problems because:

- your baby may drink less breastmilk or formula.
- your baby's stomach is not ready to digest solid foods.

What solid food should I give my baby first?

Start with iron-fortified cereal or meat. These foods contain iron, which helps with your baby's development.

Prepare a tablespoon of food. Offer small amounts to your baby on a spoon.

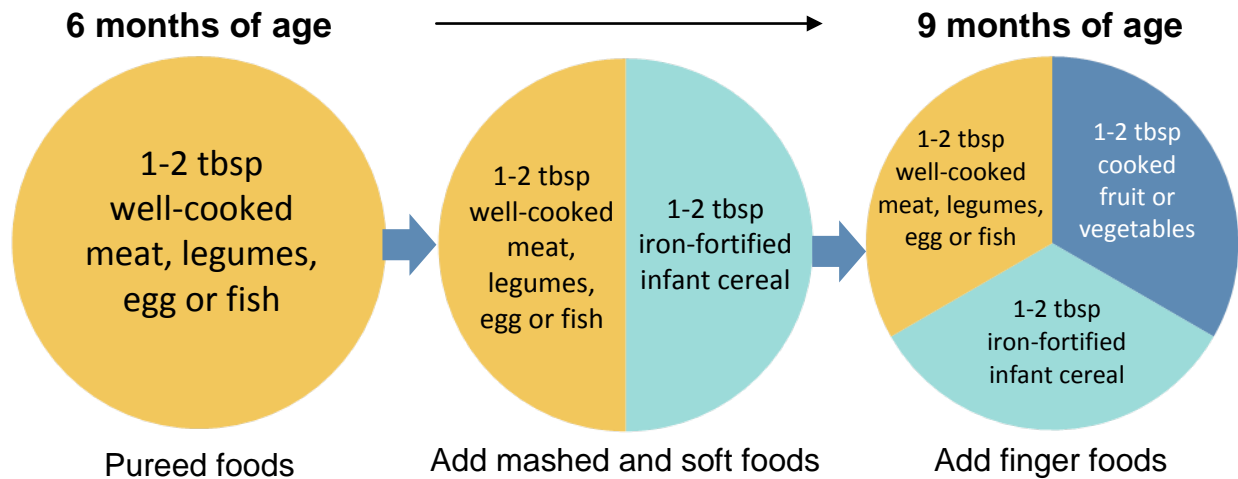


How do I introduce solid foods?

Here are some helpful tips:

- Introduce foods one at a time, about 2 to 3 days apart.
- Start with a small amount and increase as your baby shows interest.
- Meal times should always be enjoyable and an opportunity to learn new skills. Let your baby explore food by touching and tasting. We don't recommend tricking or coaxing your baby by playing games or offering sweetened foods.
- Try making your own baby food by pureeing meat, fish, stews, vegetables, and fruits. You will be able to offer your baby a wider variety of foods and texture. It also costs less.

How do I increase solid foods?



When do I give foods with more texture?

As your baby develops, he/she will be able to have foods with more texture.

Every baby is unique and will progress to foods with greater texture at their own rate. Be patient as your baby learns to eat.

Your baby's development	Number of meals and snacks a day	Texture of food
Sitting with support	2 to 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pureed, mashed and semi-solid foods
Sitting on own	2 to 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small amounts of soft mashed foods with few lumps
Crawling	3 to 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground soft mashed foods or foods that dissolve - such as whole grain crackers
Walking	3 meals 1 to 2 snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chopped foods, foods with more texture, finger foods (such as toasted O's cereal, small pieces of cooked pasta or soft vegetables, grated cheese)