

## What foods should I AVOID giving my baby?



**Cows milk:** Babies younger than 12 months should not be given cows milk. Breastmilk, formula, or both give them the nutrition they need to grow healthy and strong. Also, their digestive systems are not ready for cows milk.

**Juice:** Babies younger than 12 months should not be given juice. After 12 months of age, give no more than 4 ounces per day of 100% fruit juice, in a cup.

**Honey:** Babies should not have honey until their 1st birthday. Honey commonly has a bacteria that can make them sick.

## How can I start healthy habits?

Within a few months of starting solid foods, your baby's diet should include a variety of foods like: Breastmilk, formula, cereal, vegetables, fruits, and meats.

Eating meals as a family and listening to when your baby is hungry or full will help them to develop healthy habits.



## What about food allergies?

New recommendations from *The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases* say **there is no benefit to waiting to introduce your baby to foods people are commonly allergic to** (like eggs, dairy, soy, peanuts, shellfish, or fish).

The *American Academy of Pediatrics* recommends starting with foods that are low allergy risk, like baby cereal and baby foods and watch for symptoms. Wait 2-3 days between each new food. As your baby tries new foods, you can offer foods people are commonly allergic to. **All foods should be the right texture and serving size for your child's age.**

If your family has a history of allergies, contact your doctor about when to start foods that people are commonly allergic to.

### Learn more

- Talk to your child's doctor
- Ask your WIC nutrition educator
- Check out these websites about nutrition:
  - [Healthychildren.org](http://Healthychildren.org)
  - [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov)

Resources: [healthychildren.org](http://Healthychildren.org)  
[aap.org](http://aap.org)  
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# Starting Solid Foods





At around **6 months** of age, your baby can start eating solid foods. Breastmilk or formula will still be your baby's main food.

## Why around 6 months of age?

Breastmilk or formula will give babies all of the nutrition that they need until 6 months of age. It is recommended by the *American Academy of Pediatrics* to wait to start solid foods. Before that, a baby's digestive system is not quite ready for anything but breastmilk or formula.

## How do I know if my baby is ready to start solid foods?

- Baby can hold head steady when sitting.
- Baby opens mouth when food approaches.
- Baby can take food from the spoon with his or her lips and tongue.
- Baby can move solid food to the back of his or her mouth and swallow the food.
- When you offer food, baby **does not** push the food out with his or her tongue.
- Baby can turn his or her head away to show fullness.

## What foods should I give my baby first?

Traditionally, single grain cereals are offered first, but there is no medical evidence to say that introducing solid foods in a particular order is better for your baby. Try smooth, single ingredient foods one at a time such as baby vegetables, fruits, cereals, or meats. If mostly breastfed, your baby would benefit from foods high in iron, like iron fortified infant cereals or baby food meats.



Pureed mango



Pureed peas



Thin iron-fortified cereal  
with breastmilk or  
formula

## Tips:

- First foods should be smooth and thin.
- At first, offer only 1-2 teaspoons at a time.
- Babies need a chance to get to know new tastes. Wait 2-3 days before starting each new food. This is also the time to watch for allergic reactions such as diarrhea, rash, or vomiting.
- If baby does not like something at first, try it again in a few weeks. It may take 10-15 times for babies to decide if they like a new food.
- Always use a spoon when feeding your baby, never put cereal or food in a bottle. Offering cereal in a bottle can put your baby in danger of choking and overfeeding.

## How do I know if my baby is hungry or full?

### Hungry babies:

- Get excited when they see food
- Open their mouth and lean forward
- Follow food with their eyes



### Full Babies:

- Turn their heads away from food
- Push food away or spit it out
- Close their mouths when offered foods
- Play with their food



## Does my baby need water?

Healthy babies under 6 months of age do not need extra water.

Breastmilk, formula, or both give them the fluids they need.

When you start giving your baby solid foods, they may be ready for a small amount of water. Water is great for practicing with a cup or sippy cup. Around 1 year of age, once baby is eating more foods and growing well, they can have as much water as they like.

