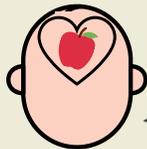


INTRODUCING SOLID FOODS

Created by Brittney Pederson, BA, IBCLC

IS YOUR BABY READY?

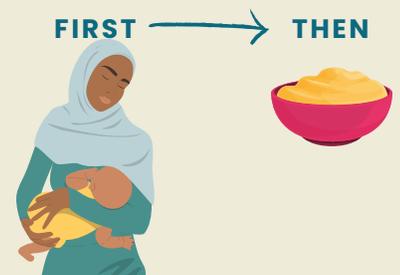


Most babies start solids around 6 months of age. Some babies need a little more time, and others are ready early. Look for these signs of readiness:

1. Your baby is able to sit independently.
 - a. Your baby should be able to reliably sit upright without needing you to catch them.
2. They have lost their tongue thrusting reflex.
 - a. If you are trying to spoon feed your baby and it is always pushed right out of their mouth, their bodies are instinctively protecting their insides and they are not quite ready for solids.
3. They are showing an interest in food.
 - a. Reaching for your food, mirroring your chewing while you are eating, etc. is important, too!

WHEN SHOULD YOU BREAST OR BOTTLE FEED?

When you are first introducing solid foods, offer to breast/chest or bottle feed your baby *before* sitting them down to explore solid foods. This gives them some food security so they feel free to explore food in all its ways. Around 9 months, you can follow your baby's lead. Expect that their choice is not set in stone, and they may change their mind at each feed. The best results come from following their lead.



WHAT SHOULD BE INTRODUCED?

Babies need frequent sources of iron. This can include major sources like beef, lentils, tofu, eggs and spinach, as well as smaller frequent offerings like molasses, dried fruit, cashews and arrowroot cookies. Parents should continue to supplement their babies with Vitamin D.

The Canadian Pediatric Society recommends that all babies* should be introduced to allergens like eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, wheat, soy and dairy as part of their first foods. You can visit FoodAllergyCanada.ca for more information.

*Babies with pre-existing allergies should consult with their doctor.

By 9 months, if your baby is not showing an interest in food, discuss this with your primary care provider and seek the support of a feeding therapist like a Speech-Language Pathologist, an Occupational Therapist, and/or a Registered Dietitian.



FOOD VICTORIES

EASY LITTLE WAYS TO BUILD FEEDING SKILLS

Created by Brittney Pederson, BA, IBCLC

For many families, the exciting opportunity of feeding can be very stressful. In the first 6 months of life, feeding challenges can feel more substantial because it feels like an all-or-nothing activity. Once you start solid foods, it is helpful to focus on *offering* foods, rather than the volume your baby is eating.

Just like we don't expect kids to go from babbling to reading and writing in one giant leap, we also don't expect kids to start eating or to eat any food we put in front of them. In fact, there are many ways they are growing in their eating skills! Your job is just to provide your baby with positive experiences and a supportive environment. This helps them to gain the confidence and skill to take in the volumes they need.

According to Kay A. Toomey, PhD, (a peds psychologist who developed the SOS Feeding Method), we are looking at kids building the following steps to eating:



Invite variety, be open to different volumes and ultimately, follow your baby's lead.

