



Tips for **Starting Solids** in Infants

Your child is developmentally ready to solids if he or she:

- Is at least 4 months old
- Can sit with little or no support
- Has good head control
- Opens his or her mouth and leans forward when food is offered
- Brings objects to his or her mouth.
- Tries to hold small objects.
- Swallows food rather than pushes it back out.

Suggestions for success:

- Pick a time of day when your baby is in good spirits, wide awake and mildly hungry for your first attempts at eating with a spoon.
- Provide a calm environment and choose a day like a weekend when you are not in a hurry to increase the chances of a positive first experience.
- You can give him or her some breastmilk or formula before the first solids so they are not uncomfortably hungry.
- Remember starting solids is **NOT** a replacement of their "milk meal" this is only in addition to it.

Introduction:

- **Start small.** Give 1 or 2 tablespoons of food, and watch for signs such as putting hands to mouth, turning head towards food, puckering, smacking or licking lips or has clenched hands indicating that he or she may still be hungry.
- Foods should be **pureed** to prevent choking. Introduce single ingredient vegetables or fruits, same food at least **5 days in a row** being sure to look out for reactions such as rash, vomiting or diarrhea.

- Introducing potentially allergenic foods such as eggs, dairy, soy, peanut products, wheat, fish or shellfish at 4-6 months of age has been proven to prevent food allergies. Therefore, early introduction in small quantities is okay. When starting these foods, be sure to apply **Aquaphor around the mouth** and avoid allowing food to touch the skin as this might cause a contact dermatitis that can be confused with an allergic reaction. Continue to watch for reactions such as rash, vomiting or diarrhea.
- For mild reactions such as rash, spit up or mild diarrhea, discontinue food and avoid it in the future unless instructed by your pediatrician to consume it again. For any swelling of lips, tongue, or difficulty breathing, or forceful persistent vomiting **call 911 immediately.**

References

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