

The Roswell Pediatric Center Infant Feeding Guide

1. Introduction

We created this guide to teach you when to start feeding, which foods to offer, methods of preparing foods, and most importantly, how to foster a positive “responsive” feeding relationship with your child.

2. Introducing solid (complimentary) foods to my infant

a. **We recommend starting foods by 6 months of age.** If your baby is developmentally ready, it is ok to start foods after age 4 months.

b. Signs of readiness

- Good head and neck control
- Sits with minimal support
- Opens mouth wide when sees food coming
- Closes lips over spoon (without tongue thrust)
- Able to turn head to refuse food

c. Meal Frequency

- Guidance
 1. **Age 4-6 months**
 - a. 1-2 solid feeds per day
 - b. Milk (breast or formula): 5-6 times/day
 2. **Age 6-9 months**
 - a. 2-3 solid feeds per day
 - b. Milk (breast or formula): 4-5 times/day
 3. **Age 9-12 months**
 - a. 3 solid feeds per day
 - b. Milk (breast or formula): 3-4 times/day
 4. **12 months**
 - a. 3 meals and 2 snacks
 - b. Milk (breast or whole milk): with meals, 3 times/day

d. Frequency of Introducing First Foods

- **Introduce only one new allergenic food per day.**
- Cereals, fruits, vegetables, and meats can be introduced along with other foods (no need to wait 3 days between new foods)
- Tip: When babies are feeling “starved” at mealtime, they may become frustrated. Offering them milk an hour or so before meals can help them to relax and be more eager to feed.

3. What to feed my infant?

- a. **Iron-rich foods** (important for preventing anemia) should be among the first foods that you offer your baby. Provide them as part of each meal. Examples are:
 - Iron-fortified cereals or other whole grains and breads
 - Meats (beef, pork, poultry), eggs, beans, chickpeas, and lentils

- b. **Allergenic Foods:** Include the 9 allergenic foods into your baby's diet **by 6 months, as this will decrease** chance of developing food allergies¹. This is especially important if your infant has mild to moderate eczema!² Include the **allergenic** foods early on and often (at least 3 times per week).
 - The 9 Allergenic foods
 1. Eggs
 2. Peanuts
 3. Tree nuts
 4. Dairy³
 5. Fish
 6. Shellfish
 7. Wheat
 8. Soy
 9. Sesame
 - Regular consumption of peanuts early on is needed to ensure tolerance.
 1. Encourage consumption of 2 tsp of peanut butter or 2 grams 3 times per week.
 2. Smooth peanut butter puree: 2 tsp of peanut butter or peanut powder mixed with a few teaspoons of pureed fruit, vegetables, or water.
 3. Peanut puffs ("Bamba") contain 2 grams of peanut protein and can be softened with 4-6 teaspoons of water.

- c. **Other Foods**
 - **"SolidStarts App"** – Learn how to safely introduce more than 200 foods to your baby. The app has nutrition information, choking guidance, and preparation suggestions.
 - **Protein foods**
Beef, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, fish, eggs, tofu, well-cooked legumes like beans, lentils, chickpeas, plain yogurt, cottage cheese, shredded cheese
 - **Whole-grain foods**
Infant cereals (oatmeal, rice, wheat, barley), pieces of bagel, dry toast strips, rice, roti, noodles, cooked pasta, flatbreads, quinoa
 - **Vegetables and Fruit**
Squash, peas, sweet potatoes, beans, apples, peaches, pears, etc.

¹ Keep Benadryl Allergy Liquid (12.5mg/5ml), or generic, at home, in the event of an allergic reaction.

² Note: If your baby has severe dry skin (eczema, atopic dermatitis) or a history of egg allergy, talk to your provider before starting peanuts or eggs, as some infants may need allergy testing prior to starting these foods.

³ Dairy includes yogurt (unsweetened), cottage cheese, and cheese. Wait until age one before introducing whole milk for drinking.

d. Foods to avoid during baby's first year

- Juice
- Added salt
- Added sugar
- Honey (both in raw form and in baked goods)
- Under 6 month, avoid fresh spinach, carrots, and beets due to the risk of a blood disorder caused by high nitrate levels in these fresh foods (note, similar jarred items are fine).

4. Signs of Food Allergies

- a. Allergic reactions commonly manifest in the following ways
 - Vomiting and or diarrhea
 - Wheezing, coughing, hoarseness
 - Eye swelling, lip swelling, hives, or eczema
- b. If your baby has a severe allergic reaction to a new food (especially wheezing, difficulty breathing, lip swelling, tongue swelling)
 - Call 911
 - Give Benadryl Elixir (1/2 tsp if 12-17 lbs., 3/4 tsp for 18-23 lbs., 1 tsp for over 24 lbs.)
- c. Allergy vs skin sensitivity
Babies may develop a rash to foods as a simple result of contact skin irritation. This usually does not mean you baby is allergic. Discuss any such concerns with your provider.

5. Ways or Styles of Introducing Solid Foods

- a. **Traditional approach**
 - Ultra-smooth pureed textures and progressing to chunkier purees over the first few months of starting solids. Pieces of soft foods are introduced after the hierarchy of smooth to chunky purees is established.
- b. **Baby-Led Weaning/Feeding**
 - This method emphasizes skipping purees and introducing solid foods from the very start. By placing strips of avocados, soft-cooked chicken, omelets etc. into baby's grasp, the parent allows the baby to self-feed.
 - There are many online guides teaching Baby-Led Weaning. One is [Feeding Littles](http://www.feedinglittles.com) (www.feedinglittles.com) which has an excellent video tutorial (for a fee).
- c. **Hybrid Approach**
 - This is a blend of starting spoon feeding with purees while also allowing baby to self-feed.
- d. Whichever method you use, remember **Responsive Feeding**. Engage with your infants, make feeding pleasant and fun.

6. Other Guidance

a. Vitamin and Iron supplements

- Vitamin D supplements are recommended for breast fed and formula fed infants for the first year of life. Infants drinking >32 ounces of formula do not need Vitamin D.
- Iron supplements (poly-vi-sol with iron) may be recommended for breast fed infants aged 4 -6 months who have not started solids.

b. Choking and Gagging

- Gagging is your baby's reflexive attempt to push anything forward that is getting too close to the narrow airway. This is normal. Be calm. Give baby a few seconds to swallow or spit out the food.
- Choking is very different from gagging. It has little to no sound because the airway is partially or completely blocked.
 1. Infants under age one: five back blows followed by five chest compressions and repeat
 2. Children older than age one: Abdominal thrusts (Heimlich maneuver)
- Learn CPR! For an online review – www.infantcpr.com (discount code = roswell)

c. Is my baby eating enough? How can I tell?

Parents are much better at determining when their kids are hungry than knowing when their kids are full. Both are equally important!

- Cues that your baby is hungry
 1. Turns towards food
 2. Opens mouth when seeing food
 3. Shows excitement
- Cues that your baby has had enough to eat
 1. Turns head away
 2. Does not open mouth
 3. Pushes food away
- Division of Responsibility:
 1. **The parent is responsible** for what, when and where the child is fed.
 2. **The child is always responsible** for how much to eat and whether to eat the foods offered.
 3. **Parents provide, child decides!**
 4. Trust your baby to let you know how much he wants to eat. Never force food into your baby's mouth.
 5. Make feeding pleasant and stress free! Enjoy!

	<u>4-6 months</u>	<u>6-8 months</u>	<u>9-12 months</u>	<u>12 months</u>
Meal frequency	1-2x/day	2-3x/day	3 meals	3 meals, 2 snacks
Purees	Smooth, pureed, mashed	Thicker, lumpier, chopped, minced, grated, or diced	Bite-sized pieces of soft fruits, cooked veggies, tender meats, breads etc.	(Family meals)
Iron rich foods	1-2x/day	2x/day	2x/day	(Family meals)
Allergenic foods ⁴	1-2x/day	2-3x/day	2-3x/day	(Family meals)
Fruits/veggies	With meals	With meals	With meals	(Family meals)
Milk frequency	5-6x/day (Breastmilk or formula)	4-5x/day (Breastmilk or formula)	3-4x/day (Breastmilk or formula)	3x/day (Breast milk or Whole milk)
Water ⁵	No	Sippy cup	Yes	Yes
Vitamin D ⁶	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Poly-vi-sol with iron	If breast fed, until starting cereals	No	No	No
Juice	No	No	No	No
Choking ⁷	5 back blows then 5 chest compressions and repeat	5 back blows then 5 chest compressions and repeat	5 back blows then 5 chest compressions and repeat	Abdominal thrusts ("Heimlich")

⁴ Eggs, Peanuts, Tree nuts, Fish, Shellfish, Dairy, Wheat, Soy, Sesame

⁵ Fluoride containing tap water or "nursery" water

⁶ Unless consuming greater than 32 ounces of formula per day

⁷ www.infantcpr.com (discount code = roswell)

Infant and Child Choking (0-4 years)

Gagging is a protective reflex which lessens as your infant gets more proficient at eating. Gagging children are coughing and red in their face. Choking however, is much more serious and occurs when food gets stuck in the child’s windpipe and blocks the airway. **A choking child is unable to cough, and, unlike gagging, is silent.**

CAUTION	
The following foods can cause choking and are NEVER safe for children ages 0-4 years	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts • Popcorn • Grapes • Hotdogs • Hard candy/Lollipops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raw carrots • Raw apples • Raisins and corn kernels • Fish with bones • Gum

Foods That Can Cause Choking	How To Make These Foods Safer
Sticky Spreads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peanut butter, tahini, and almond butter 	Spread thinly on whole grain breads or crackers. Don’t give spoonfuls of these foods
Hard Foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some raw vegetables and fruit 	Cook hard foods to soften them. Grate foods into smaller pieces
Round, Smooth Foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grapes and cherries 	Cut each into 4 small sections (quartering). Remove seeds or pits
Tube-shaped Foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotdogs, Whole cooked carrots 	Cut foods lengthwise into strips. Cut the strips into small pieces. If slicing hotdog into slices, quarter each piece.
Stringy or Chewy Foods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat, long thin pasta, and melted cheese 	Cut these foods into small pieces.

Learn CPR! For an online review – www.infantcpr.com (discount code = roswell)
 Choking infants Ages 0-1: 5 back blows followed by 5 chest compressions and repeat
****Choking children Ages 1 and Older: Abdominal Thrusts (Heimlich Maneuver)****