

Your baby may be ready for solid foods between 4 and 6 months if they are able to:

- sit well with little support,
- have good head control, and
- munch and swallow.



Your baby may NOT be ready for solid food if they:

- push solid food out with their tongue or,
- gag when a spoon or food is placed in their mouth.



When your baby is ready to eat solid foods:

- You can give 1 to 2 teaspoons of iron and zinc fortified baby cereals **OR** 1 to 2 ounces of pureed or mashed meats per day as first foods.
- There is no order for other solid foods, but the earlier vegetables are given, the more likely your baby will eat them.



1 ounce = golf ball size amount of food

Feeding Your Baby

6–12 months

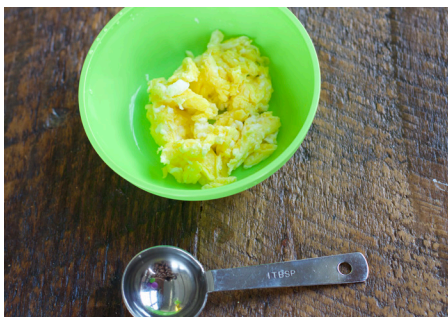
Between 6 and 11 months, your baby may eat every two to three hours. This is about five or six times per day.




- In addition to 6 to 8 ounces of breast milk or iron-fortified formula at each meal, you can give your baby:
- Up to 2 Tablespoons of vegetables and/or fruit



AND

- 4 Tablespoons of protein foods (meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cooked dry beans or peas);
- **OR** dairy foods such as cottage cheese (up to 4 ounces) or cheese (up to 2 ounces) or plain yogurt (up to 8 ounces);
- **OR** Up to 4 Tablespoons of iron-fortified infant cereal



-  2 dice = 1 ounce
-  golf ball = 2 Tbsp
-  egg = 1/4 cup
- 2 ounces or 4 Tbsp = 1/4 cup

Do NOT give your baby the following before he/she turns 1 year old:



- Honey - it can cause an illness called botulism



- Fruit juice or any sweetened beverages (fruit drinks, flavored drinks, sports drinks, sweet tea or others) - these have extra calories with low nutrition and may cause cavities



- Cow's milk - it may cause bleeding in the gut



- Plant-based milk drinks (soy, rice, or almond milk) or flavored milk powder - these are not designed to meet your baby's nutrition needs

- Nuts, grapes, popcorn, hot dogs, or hard candy – **these can cause choking**



Give your baby a variety of food made in different ways. Include foods from all groups (vegetables, fruit, grains, meat/protein, dairy).

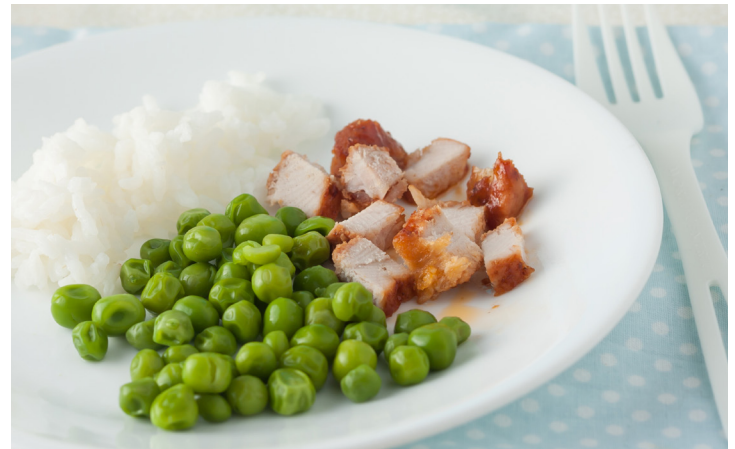
- When giving a new vegetable, try to mix it first with a familiar food such as breast milk, formula or cereal. This can help your baby learn to like vegetables.



- Between 6 and 8 months, first give your baby pureed or mashed food and then lumpy foods or soft finger foods.



- Between 8 and 12 months, your baby can start eating minced, chopped and hard finger foods. Encourage your baby to self-feed as soon as he/she is ready.



Be patient when offering a new food.

- Do not give up if your baby doesn't want the food the first time you offer it. It may take 15 to 20 tries before your baby learns to like a new food.
- Some babies make “faces” that look like they do not like a new food. This is a normal part of learning to like new food. This does not mean your baby will dislike the food. Be patient and keep trying.



Encourage your baby to self-feed.

- Babies like to use their hands to explore food. Let your child smell, lick, touch and play with new foods. Although it is messy, it allows your child to learn to like healthy food.



- Switch your baby from a bottle to a cup between 6 and 12 months.
- At around 6 months, you can use a baby spoon to give your baby pureed food. You can also give your baby water in a sippy cup.



- At around 8 months, your baby will start to try to spoon-feed her/himself and will be able to drink from a cup with less spilling.



- By 12 months, your baby should be able to spoon feed her/himself and hold a cup with both hands.

Peanut information for your baby:

- You can give your baby foods made with peanuts depending on his/her risk of food allergies.
- This depends on if your child has eczema (skin condition).
- Ask your child's doctor if you are unsure.



- Peanuts or nuts by themselves are a choking risk. They should not be given to a baby.



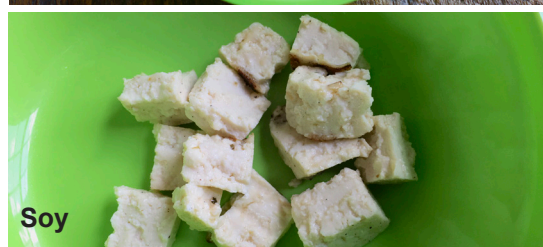
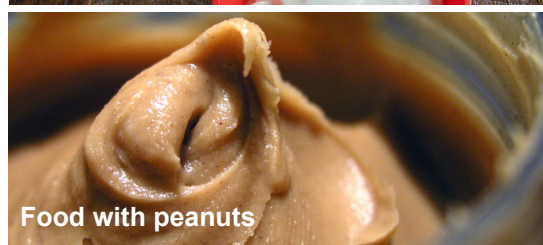
- When peanut butter is given, it should be smooth (no peanuts or chunky).



- It should also be mixed with a puree or given with another food to avoid choking.



Some foods such as dairy*, food with peanuts, eggs, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish may cause allergies.



These can be given to your baby one at a time after he/she has started eating solid food with no problems (after 4-6 months of age).

- If you or the baby's other parent has a food allergy, talk to a doctor about any steps you need to take before giving any of these foods.
- The first taste of these foods should be at home. If no reaction occurs, you can increase the amount of one new food every 3 to 5 days.
- Seek medical care right away if your child has signs of a food allergy. The signs may be a skin rash, trouble breathing, nausea, vomiting or loose stools after eating.

*Cow's milk should not be given until after age 1.