

Baby Food Introduction Schedule

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the American Academy of Pediatrics suggest that children should be introduced to solid foods other than breast milk or infant formula around the **age of 6 months**. They **do not recommend** introducing foods before the child is 4 months old.

Instructions

Once decided on when to introduce food into the baby's diet, introduce one new food at a time and wait 3-5 days before introducing another to monitor any allergic reactions. Begin with pureed foods and gradually progress to mashed and then small, soft-cooked pieces as your baby develops eating skills.

Week	Food to introduce	Tips	Recommendation	Notes
1	Single-grain baby cereal (e.g., oats, barley)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mix with breast milk or formula for a smooth, runny consistencyOffer small amounts (1-2 tablespoons) at first	Start with iron-fortified choices as they help meet baby's growing needs. Avoid rice cereal due to arsenic concerns.	
2	Pureed vegetables (e.g., sweet potatoes, carrots, green beans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduce one vegetable at a timeOffer a small amount (1-2 tablespoons)	Begin with mild vegetables; observe for any allergic reactions.	
3	Pureed fruits (e.g., apples, pears, bananas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduce one fruit at a timeOffer a small amount (1-2 tablespoons)	Introduce mild fruits; mix with cereal if desired.	
4	Pureed meats (e.g., chicken, beef, turkey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduce one meat at a timeOffer a small amount (1-2 tablespoons)	Important sources of iron and zinc.	
5	Dairy (e.g., yogurt, cheese)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Start with small amounts of soft, unsweetened varietiesAvoid cow's milk until 12 months	Start with small amounts of soft, unsweetened varieties. Avoid cow's milk until 12 months.	

Week	Food to introduce	Tips	Recommendation	Notes
6	Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce well-cooked eggs • Watch for signs of allergy 	Introduce well-cooked eggs; watch for signs of allergy.	
7	Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure fish is thoroughly cooked • Choose low-mercury types like salmon 	Ensure fish is thoroughly cooked and choose low-mercury types like salmon.	
8	Textures (e.g., mashed bananas, avocados)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mash or finely chop foods to help baby adapt to new textures 	Help baby adapt to new textures, preparing for more solid forms.	
9-12	Progressively larger and firmer pieces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include soft-cooked vegetables, small pieces of fruit, cheese, and bread • Avoid choking hazards like whole grapes and nuts 	Include soft-cooked vegetables, small pieces of fruit, cheese, and bread. Avoid choking hazards like whole grapes and nuts.	

Further tips

Common food allergies

- Introduce allergenic foods like dairy, eggs, fish, soy, shellfish, wheat, peanuts, and tree nuts one at a time.
- Watch for allergic reactions, from mild (rash) to severe (difficulty breathing).
- Consult a pediatrician before introducing peanuts if the infant has severe eczema or egg allergy.

Foods to avoid

- **Honey:** Do not give to infants under 1 year due to botulism risk.
- **Cow's milk:** Avoid using it as the main drink until 12 months, but dairy products like yogurt and cheese can be introduced earlier.
- **Choking hazards:** Avoid raw vegetables, nuts, seeds, grapes, and hot dogs; cut into small pieces if serving.

Reference

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, June 27). *When, what, and how to introduce solid foods*. <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/infantandtoddlernutrition/foods-and-drinks/when-to-introduce-solid-foods.html>

Signature of healthcare professional: _____ Date: _____