

A Guideline for Introducing Solid Foods

(Revised: February 2011)

6 Months	7 to 8 Months	9 to 12 Months	9 to 12 Months
<p>Puréed Foods When baby is ready for solid foods, you can introduce a variety of puréed choices. Iron-fortified baby cereal or pablum and other iron rich foods are important first foods.</p> <p><i>Choose from:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iron-fortified baby cereal or pablum • Beef, chicken, turkey, lamb, store-bought white fish* and salmon, light canned tuna, pork, egg • Tofu, well cooked legumes such as beans, lentils, and chickpeas <p>After your baby has started eating iron-rich foods, you can introduce other foods like puréed cooked vegetables and puréed fruits. Try sweet potatoes, squash, green and yellow beans, peas and carrots to start, one at a time.</p> <p>Preparing Puréed Foods It is simple to make puréed foods for baby at home. Babies often prefer homemade food. Call the Health Unit at 743-1000 for the fact sheet 'Making Baby Food'.</p>	<p>Lumpy Foods At around 7 months, many babies are ready for more textured foods. Even without teeth, baby can learn to 'gum' soft foods.</p> <p><i>When you feed lumpy foods:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend to chew to show baby how it is done. • Be ready to help if baby has trouble swallowing. • Remember babies may gag as they learn to chew. This gagging is not the same as choking. <p>Preparing Lumpy Foods</p> <p><i>Use a fork to make simple lumpy food:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start with cooked vegetables and fruits or soft, ripe fruit. 2. Use a fork to mash foods until they are smooth. 3. As baby learns to chew, make foods lumpier. 	<p>Finger Foods and Drinking from a Cup At around 9 months, many babies are ready to start feeding themselves with their hands. Expect this to be very messy!</p> <p>Preparing Finger Foods:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start with a few pieces of soft food where baby can reach them. 2. Keep feeding with a spoon and let baby explore the finger foods. <p>Gradually, offer most foods that the family eats.</p> <p>Some 'popular favourites' to try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft-cooked vegetables like broccoli • Pieces of soft fruits like banana • Pasta, noodles, and rice • Soft breads like pita and tortillas • Whole grain crackers • Canned beans and lentils • Pieces of well cooked chicken, eggs or beef (avoid hot dogs) • Tofu 	<p>Family Foods At 9 months, many babies are ready to join in family meals. The transition happens slowly as you introduce new textures and finger foods. When babies chew well and eat family foods, the only 'baby foods' they still need are infant cereal and breast milk or formula.</p> <p>Baby can now try homogenized whole cow's milk (3.25% M.F.) from a cup, if eating a variety of foods. Other dairy products like yogurt and cheese are also good choices.</p> <p>Some 'popular favourites' to try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shepherd's pie • Chili • Thick soups • Meatloaf • Homemade macaroni and cheese <p>Honey should not be fed to infants less than 12 months of age due to a danger of botulism (type of food poisoning).</p>

- For more information about this Factsheet, call the Peterborough County-City Health Unit, Nutrition Promotion Program, at 743-1000.
- To register for *FREE* "Feeding Your Baby" classes, call Peterborough Family Resource Centre at 748-9144.
- Questions on healthy eating? Speak to a Registered Dietitian at EatRight Ontario 1-877-5105102 www.Ontario.ca/EatRight.

Family Meals with Baby – Feeding from Six Months to One Year

Is Baby Ready for Solid Foods?

At six months, most babies are ready to start eating solid foods. If your baby is about that age, look for these signs of readiness for solids:

- Sits up in a high chair with or without support
- Opens mouth when you offer food from a spoon
- Keeps mouth open if he wants the food you offer
- Turns head away if he does not want something
- Closes lips over a spoon to scrape off food
- Keeps food in mouth instead of squeezing it back out onto his chin

Letting Baby Adjust to Solids

Some babies like a spoon and enjoy solid food the first time they try it. Others may take time to adjust. Follow baby's lead. Give solid food after breastfeeding as breast milk is still an important source of nutrition during this time. **Watch for and respect your baby's feeding signals.**

Helping the Cautious Eater

Baby may be naturally cautious about solid foods. Keep offering a few bites at meal times and take it slowly. Cautious eaters need time to get used to the new tastes and textures. Some babies need to taste a new food 10 to 20 times before they will eat it.

Ready to Start Feeding Solid Foods...

Enjoy meals together

A positive attitude helps make an enjoyable meal:

- Do not rush – stay as relaxed as possible.
- Speak in a pleasant and encouraging voice.
- Keep your baby company instead of entertaining him.
- Do not have the television or radio on.
- Let baby sit in a high chair and join others at meals.

Feeding solid foods step by step

1. Put baby in a high chair – prop her up with a couple of pillows if you need to.
2. Make sure she can sit up straight to help her swallow.
3. Sit right in front of her – be face to face.
4. Hold the spoonful of food away from her face.
5. Wait for her to pay attention and open her mouth.
6. Bring the spoon to her open mouth and let her close her mouth over the spoon.
7. Feed her as fast or as slowly as she wants.
8. If your baby does not swallow the food, they may not be ready for solid food yet. Wait a few days and try again.
9. Let her touch her food – it's supposed to be messy!
10. Respect her when she lets you know she is finished – does not open her mouth, turns her head away, or does not acknowledge the food.
11. Never trick your baby into eating more than she wants. Respect her limits.

Healthy and Safe Eating

What you should know about allergies

All families should introduce new foods to baby one at a time and should not give mixed foods. Wait 3-5 days before giving a new food and watch for reactions in your baby, such as hives or a rash. If you think your baby has an allergy, speak to your doctor.

Families with allergies should be cautious, and discuss introducing new foods to their baby with their Doctor, Nurse Practitioner or Dietitian. You may need to wait to start some foods until your baby is older.

Choking

Never leave baby alone while he is eating. Hard and sticky foods can cause choking and should be avoided. Some of these foods are nuts, seeds, fish with bones, globs of peanut, nut or seed butters, raisins, popcorn, ice cubes, chips, gum, marshmallows, hard candies or jelly beans. Dice and chop round foods like carrots, grapes and hotdogs or cut lengthwise and then into small pieces. Peanut butter and nut butters should be spread thinly on crackers or bread.

Fish for Healthy Development

There are many fish that are healthy and safe to eat for the entire family. Healthy fats in fish help in the normal development of the brain and eye in young children. Choose from the many fish that are low in mercury. *Speak with a Registered Dietitian about choosing fish wisely. Call *EatRight Ontario* at 1-877-510-5102 or www.Ontario.ca/EatRight