



Introducing Solid Foods (Four Months)

Your child is ready for solid foods. The most important thing to remember about solid food is to start slowly. This is done in order to detect any possible reactions your child may have. Food reactions may include a rash, vomiting, and increased spitting up, diarrhea or fussiness. If your child has any of these symptoms when starting a new food- stop the food and wait one month before trying that food again. When starting to feed your baby, it is best to give the foods with a spoon before the breast or formula feeding. Do not give your baby honey or karo syrup until he/she is one year old. If your child has eczema or egg allergy, please ask us for a referral to an allergist to determine the process to introduce peanut butter. If your child does not have eczema or egg allergy, introducing peanut butter and eggs around 6 months of age may prevent the development of allergies.

The first food to start is rice cereal (a few tablespoons). This should be mixed with enough breast milk or formula to make it thin- as your baby adjusts to spoon feeding you can gradually make the cereal mixture thicker. Don't be surprised if your baby doesn't take cereal off a spoon right away. They have to learn how to eat with a spoon. Your baby may have as much cereal as he/she desires. Once he/she has finished, wait 15-30 minutes before offering the breast or bottle. Your child may take the same amount or less of breast milk/formula after a solid feeding- let your baby decide when he/she is finished. Whenever you introduce a new food, give the new food daily for three days. If there are no reactions, you can include that food in your child's regular diet. After five days of cereal your child is ready for other foods. You can start a new food every five days.

Feed new foods when your infant is healthy, do not try new foods when your child has a cold, vomiting, diarrhea or other illness.

Fruits and Vegetables

Your child is now ready to add fruits and vegetables to cereal (day 6). Start one new fruit or vegetable every five days. You may start fruits and vegetables in any order. Applesauce, pears, bananas, green beans, peas, sweet potatoes are all good starters. Place the fruit or vegetable in a bowl and add the dry cereal to the bowl to make it the right thickness. You do not need to add any breast milk or formula. Give the new food mixed with cereal once a day for three days in a row, using cereal alone at the other feeding (day 6-8). On day 9 you can give mixture twice a day- breakfast and dinner.

Every five days you may try a new fruit or vegetable or cereal. You do not need to stop the previous foods during this time. First foods are not necessary for most babies. Pick the jars that are single foods and most economical. Once your child has had all the single ingredient jars, you can try the combination fruits (for example: once your child has had applesauce, he can try apples and blueberries). Introduce cereal in the following order: 1st- rice, 2nd- barley, 3rd- oatmeal. Alternate the green, yellow and orange vegetable types for variety and nutrition.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
AM	rice	rice	rice	rice	rice
PM				rice	rice
	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
AM	fruit/veg & rice	fruit/veg & rice	fruit/veg & rice	fruit/veg & rice	fruit/veg & rice
PM	rice	rice	rice	fruit/veg & rice	fruit/veg & rice

Juices

The AAP no longer recommends juice for infants under one year of age unless we have recommended it to treat constipation.

Five Months

One month after starting baby foods you can increase to three feedings a day. Your child will now be on three meals a day and three to four breast or formula feedings a day. You can also give second stage meat and vegetable dinners but do not give third stage dinners until seven months.

Breakfast: Fruit mixed with cereal

Lunch: Vegetables and fruit (cereal optional)

Dinner: Fruit mixed with cereal and vegetables

You should offer the breast or formula after each meal and usually before bed.

Peanut Butter

Peanut can be introduced by mixing 2 teaspoons of peanut butter with 2-3 tablespoons of pureed fruit or vegetable (without cereal). For the first feeding, offer a small portion of the mixture and observe closely for 10 minutes. If there is no allergic reaction after the small taste, give the remainder of the peanut containing mixture and continue to observe for two hours. Watch for a new rash, hives around the mouth or face, lip swelling, vomiting, full body hives, face or tongue swelling, any difficulty breathing, wheeze, repeated coughing, change in skin color or sudden tiredness. The peanut butter should be offered at least weekly.

Finger Foods

At five months of age you can start to experiment with teething biscuits, Zwieback toast and

"babies first cookies". Give these foods after spoon feeding and watch your baby carefully to prevent choking. Stop the Zwieback toast when your baby can break off hard pieces.