



OH SO SIMPLE SOLIDS

Initially babies only need milk (breast or formula). As they get older, food is needed for added nutrition for growth and development. This results in your baby drinking less milk as they progress to eating solid foods. This is an important time that can play a major role in a child's future health.

WHY?

As your baby grows, the ability of breast milk to meet their nutritional needs becomes limited, which is why solid foods are introduced to meet this nutritional gap. Breast milk becomes insufficient in energy, protein, iron, zinc, and vitamins A and D at about 6 months, making the timely introduction of solids necessary for both nutritional and developmental reasons.



WHEN?

The World Health Organization recommends solids are started from around 6 months old. The European Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition (ESPGHN) guidelines state that solids can be introduced between 17 and 26 weeks.

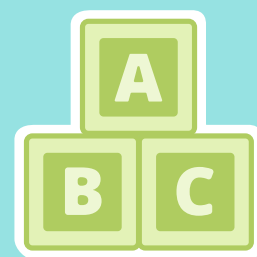
WHEN IS BABY READY?

Baby is eager to participate in mealtime and may try to grab food and put it in the mouth

Baby sits without support and can hold head steady

Baby opens mouth when spoon approaches

Baby wakes up more frequently for night feeds than before



FOODS TO INCLUDE

Provide a variety of foods to your baby for a variety of nutrients.

Carbohydrates: brown rice, oats, sweet potato, potato, mashed/strained fruit (e.g. banana, apricots, paw paw, mango, peaches) and vegetables (e.g. pumpkin, butternut, gem squash, broccoli, spinach, carrots)

Protein: red meat, chicken, fish (e.g. hake, kingklip, salmon, pilchards, tuna), liver, eggs, dairy (e.g. full cream yoghurt, cream cheese, cow's milk only after 12 months), legumes (e.g. beans, chickpeas, lentils)

Fats: nut butters, olive oil, avocado, avocado oil

FOODS TO AVOID

Salt: Processed meat; avoid adding salt to food.

Sugar: Sugar-containing foods (e.g. cakes, muffins, pastries) and drinks (e.g. fizzy drinks, cool drinks), honey (under the age of 12 months). Avoid adding sugar to food.

Hard foods: e.g. whole nuts, grapes, hard sweets, olives, popcorn

Cow's milk: (under the age of 12 months), milk alternatives e.g. rice milk, almond milk

Fruit juice



ALLERGENS

There is no convincing evidence that avoidance or delayed introduction of potentially allergenic foods (e.g. nuts, fish and eggs) reduces allergies.

Test for allergens one at a time and over a few days. Speak to your dietitian for more guidance.

HUNGER CUES

Reaches/ points to food, excited arm and leg movement, fingers to the mouth, opening of the mouth and move towards the spoon, crying, smiling, cooing or gazing at caregiver.



FULLNESS CUES

Fussy during feeds, eating slows down, closed mouth, pushes food away, falling asleep, spitting out of food, changes posture, uses hands more actively.

