

Feeding Your Baby Solid Foods

When?

Your baby should show interest in eating solid foods between 4 and 6 months of age.



Do I show signs that I am ready to eat food?

Your baby may be ready to eat solid foods if they...

- ✓ Have good head and neck control.
- ✓ Sit up with little or no support.
- ✓ Open their mouth when offered safe foods.
- ✓ Show an interest in and try to play with foods.

What?

Recommendations for first foods:

- Start with foods that contain only one ingredient, such as fortified baby cereal, a pureed vegetable, or a pureed fruit.
- Slowly progress to two-ingredient purees, such as meat mixed with a vegetable.
- Offer thin purees at first. As your baby gets used to different textures, advance to mashed foods.
- Avoid feeding sweets or adding sugar or salt to foods.
- Infant cereal should not be given in a bottle.
- Until baby is 12 months old, avoid cow's milk, juice, and honey.
- Until baby is 4 years old, avoid hard, round, or sticky foods such as whole nuts or grapes, raw carrots, or unthinned peanut butter (choking hazards).



How?

How to introduce solid foods:

- Continue to provide breast milk or infant formula during the first year of life.
- Feed your baby in a high chair and stay with them the whole time, watching for signs of choking.
- Allow your baby to try small amounts of purees first. Slowly add additional foods and increase the number of times you give each food weekly.
- Your baby may need to be offered a new food several times before accepting this food.
- Gradually offer a variety of foods as baby adapts to new flavors and textures.

Be patient. It may take a while before I like a new food.



How to Prepare Infant-Safe Peanut-Containing Foods at Home for Your Baby

There are several ways you can safely introduce peanut-containing foods to your baby. Introducing these foods as early as 4 to 6 months of age can reduce the chance of your baby developing a peanut allergy.

Option 1: Thinned creamy peanut butter

1. Start with 2 teaspoons of creamy peanut butter in a small dish. (Don't use chunky peanut butter, which is a choking hazard.)
2. Slowly add 2 to 3 teaspoons of warm water, breast milk or formula.
3. Stir until peanut butter is well blended and the mixture is runny. Let the mixture cool if needed.



Option 2: Creamy peanut butter in vegetable puree, fruit puree, or infant cereal

1. Start with 2 teaspoons of creamy peanut butter in a small dish.
2. Add 2 to 3 tablespoons of any vegetable puree, fruit puree, or infant cereal your baby already eats.
3. Adjust the amount of puree to match your baby's preferred texture and stir to mix.



Option 3: Peanut flour or peanut butter powder in fruit or vegetable puree

1. Measure 2 teaspoons of peanut flour or peanut butter powder into a small dish.
2. Add 2 tablespoons of any pureed fruits or vegetables that your baby already eats.
3. Adjust the amount of puree to match your baby's preferred texture and stir to mix.



Option 4: Peanut puffs

Puffed peanut snacks are made with peanuts and corn. You can buy puffed peanut snacks online or in some grocery stores.

- **Babies under 7 months:** Give softened puffed peanut snacks. Put two-thirds of a 1-oz bag of puffed peanut snacks in a small bowl and crush it into powder. Add 1.5 to 2 tablespoons of water, breastmilk, or formula to soften the puffed peanut snacks.
- **Older babies:** Give regular puffed peanut snacks. If your baby is already easily eating other puffed foods, give puffed peanut snacks right out of the package. One serving is about 21 puffs.



Visit [FoodAllergyPrevention.org](https://www.foodallergy.org) to find more tips on safely feeding your baby first solid foods, how to recognize a food allergy reaction, and information about the research on preventing food allergies.

Is My Baby Having a Food Allergy Reaction?

Severe food allergy reactions are rare in babies under 6 months of age. But they do happen. Here are some tips to help you speak with a doctor or seek emergency help.

Mild Food Allergy Symptoms

Food allergy reactions can be mild or severe. Some mild food allergy symptoms include:

- A few hives or mild itch on the skin (raised, often itchy, red bumps or rash)
- Itchy or runny nose or sneezing
- Itchy mouth
- Mild nausea or stomach discomfort

“Some of the symptoms of a mild food allergy can be caused by other things too. So, it can be hard to tell if the symptom is from a food allergy or something else. Use the simple test below to see if it might be a food allergy reaction”

Could Your Baby Be Telling You it is a Food Allergy?

Babies have different ways of telling you something hurts or is wrong. Here are some signs you might see in a very young baby who is having a food allergy reaction:

- Putting their hands in their mouth
- Pulling or scratching at their tongue, face, or ears

Could it Be a Food Allergy?

If you can answer **YES to ALL THREE** items below, the symptoms may be a mild food allergy reaction and you should contact your baby's health care provider.



- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Your baby has one or more mild food allergy symptoms and you have not seen the symptom(s) in your baby before. | YES | NO |
| 2. Shortly before the symptom(s) started your baby ate a new food or had a food they have only had a few times before. | YES | NO |
| 3. It has been a few minutes but no more than 2 hours since your baby ate the food. | YES | NO |

Severe Food Allergy Symptoms to Watch For

IMPORTANT! If your baby has any of the severe symptoms listed below, call 911 or go to the emergency room right away. These symptoms can be a potentially life-threatening food allergy reaction.



Skin

Hives or rash covering large areas of the body



Mouth or Face

Swelling of lips, tongue, eyes, or part of the face



Throat

Trouble swallowing



Lungs or Chest

Coughing repeatedly or wheezing;
Shortness of breath or trouble breathing



Gut

Continuous spitting up or vomiting; Severe diarrhea



Other

Sudden sleepiness, difficult to wake; Weak pulse; Floppy or limp head, arms, or legs; Gray, pale, blue, or purple skin; Fainting (passing out)

For more information about food allergy, including ways to help prevent food allergies before they start, visit [FoodAllergyPrevention.org](https://www.FoodAllergyPrevention.org).