

What foods to avoid

- High sugar and salty items
- Soft drinks, fruit juice or tea
- Hard foods such as nuts, popcorn and raw carrots that could lead to choking. Whole nuts should be avoided until after 3 years old
- Honey should not be offered before 12 months. It may lead to botulism (a rare but serious form of food poisoning caused by bacteria)
- Full cream cows milk should not be given as a whole milk drink until after 12 months. Any milk can be given after 2 years of age. Avoid flavoured milks which are high in sugar. Milk alternative such as soy, almond or coconut milk may contain less protein and fat than cow's milk, consider choosing one's that are fortified with Calcium and Vitamin D.

Contact details

Child Youth and Family Health

138 Thuringowa Road, Kirwan

Phone: 4433 9000

Where can I find help and advice?

Child Youth and Family Health

Phone: 4433 9000

Raising Children Network

www.raisingchildren.net.au

Eat for Health

www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Australian Breastfeeding Association

www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Phone: 1800 686 268

Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA)

www.allergy.org.au

Acknowledgements

Baby's first foods, Centre for Children's Health and Wellbeing, Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service, 2015

Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA), 2019, How to Introduce Solid Foods for Allergy Prevention

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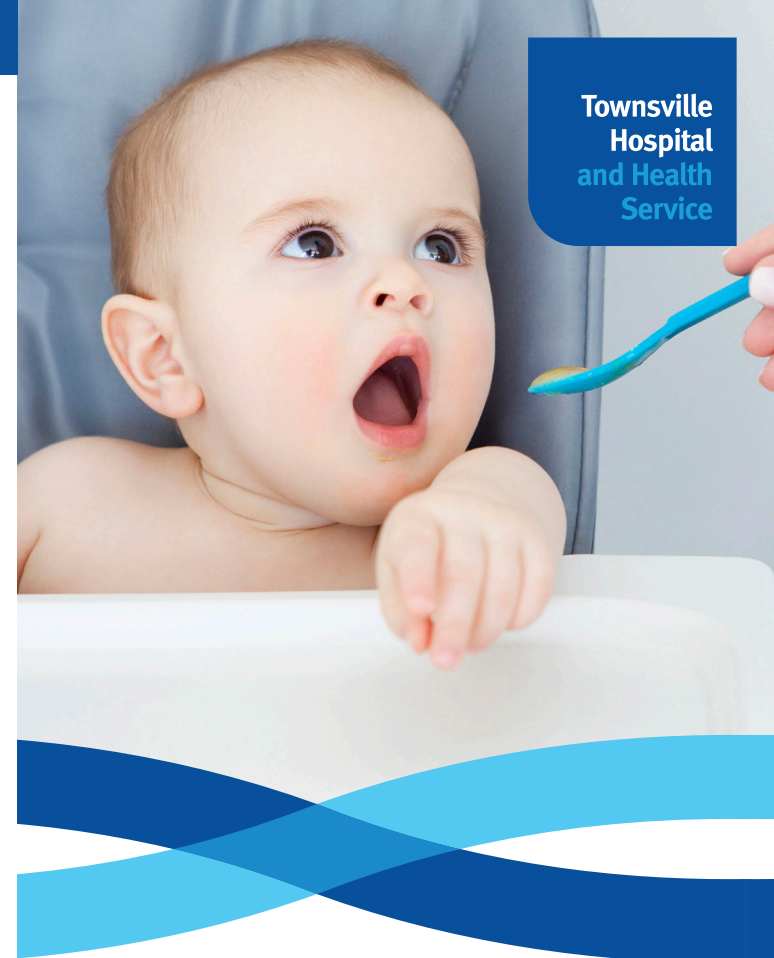
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Townsville
Hospital
and Health
Service

Baby's first foods: A guide to starting solids

Advice for parents and carers

Kirwan Child Health
Child Youth and Family Health



What age do I give food to my baby?

Start to introduce solid foods around 6 months of age (not before 4 months) when your baby is ready.

Don't wait too long after 6 months because your baby needs nutrients from other foods, particularly iron-rich foods, to continue to grow and develop. This can include iron-fortified baby cereal, pureed meats and beans.

How do I know my baby is ready for food?

- Is your baby holding their head up and sitting up?
- Is your baby reaching for food and getting excited when you or your family are eating?
- Is your baby opening their mouth when food or a spoon touches their lips?



How do I to start?

Continue to breastfeed or offer formula while you are introducing solid food.

Start with pureed, mashed or mushy foods then move onto small pieces as your baby grows such as steamed vegetables, roasted vegetable wedges, fish or chicken, soft fruits, bread or toast and crackers. It is important to offer finger foods by 8-9 months so your baby can learn to chew.

At the start, offer your baby only a small amount of food (1-2 teaspoons) once per day, when your baby appears most hungry. This will usually be at least one hour after a milk feed.

As your baby grows, increase the number and the size of meals you give your baby each day. By one year old, your baby will be eating the same foods as the rest of the family.

Never leave your baby alone while they are eating.

At 6 months of age, your baby can start drinking from a cup (one with handles and lid usually work best in the beginning). Introduce small amounts of boiled, cooled water with meals.



What about baby-led weaning?

Baby-led weaning is a way of giving first foods by simply letting your baby feed themselves. Offer only soft foods cut into pieces your baby can hold. They need to be able to feed themselves.

What about allergies?

You can give your baby different foods in any order. Include common allergy causing foods such as smooth peanut butter, cooked whole eggs (avoid raw egg) and seafood. Delaying introduction of these foods has been shown to increase the chance of developing food allergies. Once introduced, continue to give these foods to your baby regularly (twice weekly), as part of a varied diet, to maintain tolerance.

If other family members have food allergies, it is still important to introduce those foods to your baby. If you suspect a food allergy seek medical advice.