

What should my baby be eating?

Infant nutrition varies greatly. You should learn your child's cues for being hungry and satisfied and feed accordingly. The information provided in this handout are *guidelines*. Infants 0-6 months obtain nutrition primarily through breastmilk, or in extreme cases, formula. If your child is receiving formula, do NOT use low iron formula. Iron is important for brain function. If your child has problems with constipation, discuss treatment options with your pediatrician.

Common FAQ's

- **When do I start solids?**

This depends on developmental readiness of your child and gut maturity. These goals are usually met around 6 months of age. Feeding too early or feeding too late can result in increased risk of developing allergies.

When starting solids, wait 2-3 days between introducing new foods so that you can watch for any signs of allergic reaction.

- **When do I start juices?**

Honestly, juice does nothing for nutritional value. Juice usually concentrates the sugars from fruits, but not the fiber. If you have ever made freshly squeezed orange juice, you know how many oranges it takes to make juice (lots!). We only need 2-3 servings of a variety of fruits per day as adults, infants/children need less. Excessive juice intake also has been linked to higher risks of development of childhood obesity.

- **What foods do I need to avoid?**

The only real foods to avoid are honey (due to infant botulism) until 1 year of age and fish high in mercury. Eggs, meats not high in mercury, nuts are all nutritious and good for your baby, just make sure the consistency does not result in a choking hazard. Avoid popcorn/whole nuts/other

small, hard foods and round foods (grapes, carrots, hotdogs) until 4-5 years of age (due to risk of choking hazard). Many of these foods can be cut up differently to avoid problems, i.e. cutting hotdogs lengthwise so they cannot block the airway.

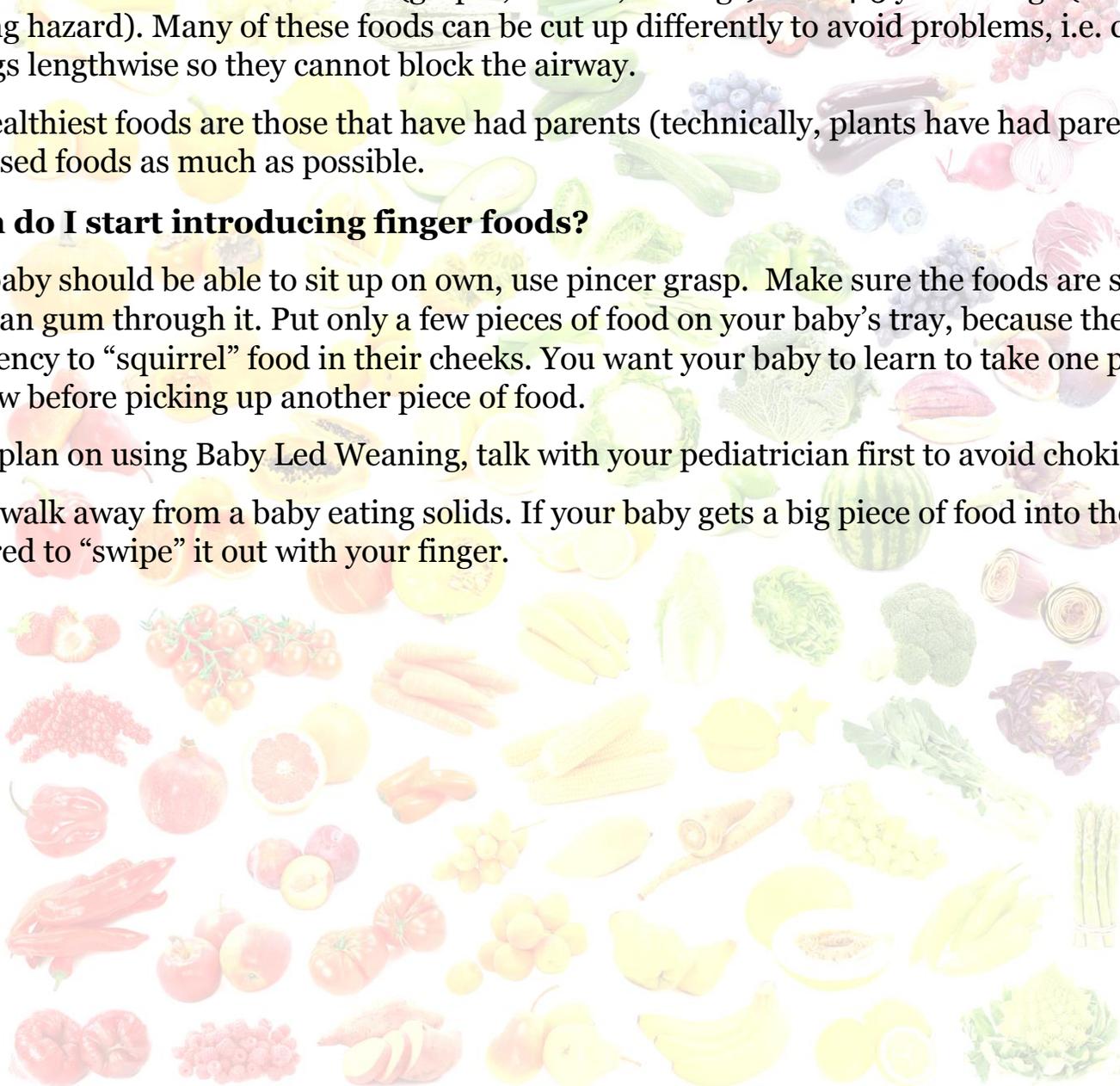
The healthiest foods are those that have had parents (technically, plants have had parents). Avoid processed foods as much as possible.

- **When do I start introducing finger foods?**

Your baby should be able to sit up on own, use pincer grasp. Make sure the foods are soft so your child can gum through it. Put only a few pieces of food on your baby's tray, because they often have a tendency to "squirrel" food in their cheeks. You want your baby to learn to take one piece and swallow before picking up another piece of food.

If you plan on using Baby Led Weaning, talk with your pediatrician first to avoid choking hazards.

Never walk away from a baby eating solids. If your baby gets a big piece of food into the mouth, be prepared to "swipe" it out with your finger.



**0-4
months**

- Poor head control
- Only sucks and swallows

Milk

- 5-10 breast feedings per day
- 15-32 fluid ounces per day

Solids

- None

**4-6
months**

- Will usually thrust food out with tongue

Milk

- 4-10 breast feedings per day
- 26-40 fluid ounces per day

Solids

- None

6-8 months

- Does not thrust food out with tongue
- Sits up with support
- Holds head up, moving it voluntary
- Opens mouth when seeing food

1-2 solid feed per day

- 4-10 breast feedings per day
- 26-32 fluid ounces per day

Milk



- No need for rice cereal or oatmeal cereal
- May start with 2-3 tsp and advance to 3-9 Tbsp of rice – mashed/pureed

Cereals & Breads



- Start with pureed 1-2 tsp advancing to ½ cup per day
- May also advance from pureed to strained or mashed (any vegetable is fine)

Vegetables



- Start with pureed 1-2 tsp advancing to ½ cup per day
- May also advance from pureed to strained or mashed (any fruit is fine)*

Fruits



- 1-2 tsp advanced to 1 ounce of pureed meats (chicken, beef, pork, fish), hardboiled egg yolk, legumes/beans, tofu, nuts (paste form), whole fat cheese/yogurt

Proteins



* Sometimes acidic fruits can cause a rash (small red bumps) around the mouth or diaper rash. This does not always indicate an allergy. If there is no vomiting, diarrhea, hives, wheezing, swelling of tongue/lips, may retry at a later time.

8-10 months

- Moves tongue from side to side
- Begins spoon feeding with help

2-3 solid feed per day

- 4-10 breast feedings per day
- 21-32 fluid ounces per day

Milk



- May continue rice
- Use soft breads, crackers more as finger foods

Cereals & Breads



- 1/4 to 1/2 cup per day of soft/mashed foods

Vegetables



- 1/4 to 1/2 cup per day of soft/mashed foods

Fruits



- 1 ounce of ground or finely chopped boneless meats (chicken, beef, pork, fish), hardboiled egg yolk, legumes/beans, tofu, nuts (paste form), whole fat cheese/yogurt.

Proteins



10-12 months

- Begins to chew and has some teeth
- Begins to hold food and use fingers to feed self (pincer grasp)

3-5 solids feeds per day (including snacks)

***At 12 months of age, if formula fed, transition from formula to whole cow's milk. Limit to 16 ounces per day.*

- 3-4 breast feedings per day
- 21-29 fluid ounces per day by cup or bottle **

Milk



- Whole wheat breads, rice, noodles, spaghetti

Cereals & Breads



- Cooked vegetable pieces, some raw veggies like cucumbers & tomatoes

Vegetables



- All fresh fruit peeled & seeded

Fruits



- 1 - 1.5 ounces of small tender pieces of boneless meat, whole fat cheese/yogurt, cooked beans, scrambled eggs, nuts crushed/paste.

Proteins

