

Food Introduction for Your Baby

It's easy to see our babies growing taller and gaining weight but we should also realize their internal organs are also developing and need attention too! We wouldn't expect our babies to learn how to run before they walk so we shouldn't expect their digestive tracts to be able to breakdown more complex foods before simpler foods.

Introducing solid foods too early (especially those that are known to be common food offenders) may cause allergies or food sensitivities because their digestive tract is not ready to properly break down most foods.

The following symptoms may indicate that your child is experiencing a negative reaction to a certain food:

Runny nose and eyes	Eczema/Hives/Rashes	Wheezing
Ear Infections	Headache	Diarrhea
Gas	Abdominal Discomfort	Rash around mouth/anus
Mucus in stool	Constipation	Dark circles around eyes
Redness of face/cheeks	Hyperactivity	Crankiness

Solids foods can be introduced to babies at around 6months or when they are able to sit up and push food away. It is best to introduce one food at a time (i.e. one new food per week) and take note of any new physical or behavioral reactions that may present.

The most common food offenders **include cow's milk, wheat, citrus fruits, eggs, peanuts, corn, fish, shellfish, spices and chocolate.** Try to avoid these foods for the entire first year of introducing new foods to your baby. It is recommended that vegetables be introduced before fruits, so that infants don't come to expect sweets at their meals. Non-allergenic foods should be rotated every five to six days to minimize sensitization which may occur when the same foods are eaten once or twice daily for five to seven consecutive days.

Try to choose fresh, whole foods when you are grocery shopping for your baby and stay away from refined sugars, hydrogenated oils, artificial food colorings and food additives.

Food Introduction Schedule

6-9months: Pureed, mashed foods containing **iron**. Aim for 1-2 Tbs/day. Vegetables should be cooked. **Make sure to wash all fruits and veggies thoroughly to remove pesticides/herbicides/insecticides/wash.** You can purchase Fruit and Veggie wash solutions from your grocery store.

Fruits and Vegetables	Grains	Protein and Fats
Carrot Broccoli Sprouts (blended in water) Artichoke Turnips Beets Asparagus Squash Yam Dark Leafy Greens (swiss chard, bok choy, kale,) endive Pears Blackberries Blueberries Peaches (cooked)		Breast milk

9-12 months: Pureed, mashed foods **high in zinc and bulk**. Aim for 2-4 Tbs/day. Vegetables should be cooked.

Fruits and Vegetables	Grains	Protein and Fats
Potato and Sweet Potato Cucumber Cabbage Celery Onion and garlic Peppers Peas Green beans Cauliflower Bananas and Plantains Apples (cooked) Kiwi Other Berries Grapes (skinned and mashed) Plums and prunes Apricots and Nectarines (cooked)	NON-GLUTEN grains - amaranth - arrowroot - millet - quinoa - brown rice - basmati rice - wild rice - buckwheat	Breast milk Avocado

12-18 months: Pureed, mashed foods **high in B vitamins and calcium**. Aim for 4 Tbs/day and work up to 10+ Tbs toward 18mos (allow baby to eat amount desired). Raw vegetables and fruits can now be introduced and it is now safe to sweeten using honey.

Fruits and Vegetables	Grains	Protein and Fats
Raw veggies Cabbage Corn (common allergen so monitor carefully) Tomatoes (common allergen so monitor carefully) Apples (raw) Apricots (raw) Peaches (raw) Raspberries Mangoes Citrus (common allergen so monitor carefully) Strawberries (common allergen so monitor carefully)	Gluten grains Oats Barley Rye ** all of the above are common allergens so introduce one at a time and monitor carefully.	Breast milk Lentils Lima beans Broad beans Butter/ghee Yogurt Cheese (preferably goat) Goat's and sheep milk Buttermilk Chicken Fish Lamb Sunflower seeds Sesame seeds Pumpkin seeds Seed milks Seed butters

18-24 months: Foods **high in protein to support growth**.

Fruits and Vegetables	Grains	Protein and Fats
Oranges and other citrus fruits (common allergen so monitor carefully) Pineapple	Wheat family (common allergen so monitor carefully)	Breast milk Beef Pork Nuts, nut butters and nut milks (common allergy so monitor carefully) Eggs (common allergy so monitor carefully)

>2yrs old:

Fruits and Vegetables	Grains	Protein and Fats
		Peanut butter (common allergy so monitor carefully)

For more information, please contact Pediatric Naturopathic Doctor Aileen Lim-Trotter at aileen@zen-tai.com or 647-436-6271.

Resource: Roberts, Susan. Naturopathic Pediatric Essential