

Baby's First Foods

Introducing Solids





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Health Canada recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life for healthy term infants with continued breastfeeding for up to 2 years and beyond. Most babies are ready for the addition of iron-rich complementary solid foods at 6 months of age. Breastfed babies require a daily supplement of 400 IU (10 mcg) of vitamin D until 2 years of age. Babies who are not breastfed do not need a vitamin D supplement because it's already added to commercial infant formula.

Introducing solid food

At 6 months

Since birth your baby has been growing on breast milk or infant formula with iron. At 6 months, breast milk and formula with iron should still be your baby's main food, but now it is time to add solid foods. Solid foods provide nutrients and textures needed for your baby's healthy growth and development. This is an exciting time for both your baby and you!

It is important to introduce solid foods to your baby around 6 months to ensure they start learning to eat and explore different textures and flavours. Even without teeth, most babies are able to chew a variety of soft, lumpy foods and finger foods.

What are the signs my baby is ready for solid food?

- ▶ if baby is reaching for your food
- ▶ sits up with very little help
- ▶ holds their head up
- ▶ opens their mouth when spoon is offered
- ▶ turns their head to refuse food
- ▶ expresses interest in food
- ▶ expresses interest in utensils (grabs for spoon, bangs spoon)

Feeding Tips

- ▶ Choose foods and textures that suit your baby's skills and age.
- ▶ It is important to try different textures. This helps baby learn to chew, swallow and enjoy the same food the family is eating.
- ▶ Use a small bowl or plate for feeding your baby.
- ▶ Any food left over should be thrown out as germs can spoil the food.
- ▶ Babies have small stomachs and need small, frequent meals and snacks. Begin by offering 1 to 2 teaspoons (5 to 10 mL) of food and gradually give more as baby accepts it. Let baby decide how much to eat.
- ▶ Once baby is eating a variety of foods, baby will typically eat anywhere from 1 to 5 tablespoons (15 to 75 mL) of each food offered at a meal.
- ▶ Start with 1 meal a day and gradually increase to 3 meals a day and snacks.
- ▶ Introduce common food allergens 1 at a time. Wait 2 days before introducing a new food. That way, if your baby develops a reaction, you'll have a better idea of what food might have caused it. For more information on allergies see page 20.
- ▶ As you introduce new foods, continue to offer foods that baby has already tried.
- ▶ Baby's appetite will vary from day-to-day. Some days a baby will eat a lot, other days not so much.
- ▶ Both you and baby should be relaxed and happy at mealtimes. Have fun!

Bowel Movements

When any change is made to baby's diet, bowel movements may change in firmness and frequency. Stools may become firmer and may have a strong odour.

These changes include:

- ▶ Changing from breast milk to infant formula or cow's milk.
- ▶ Providing a supplemental feeding of infant formula when you are otherwise exclusively breastfeeding.
- ▶ Changing brands of infant formula.
- ▶ Starting pureed or table foods.

Usually this change does not last long, and a new bowel movement pattern soon develops. For example, you may see pieces of food in the stool.

If you notice significant changes to baby's stools you should discuss with your healthcare provider.



Getting ready for meal times

Face baby to feed

Put baby in a high chair, sitting straight up, facing forward. Use the safety belt to secure baby safely in the high chair. Sit so you are facing each other.

Baby plays with food

Babies like to touch and feel new foods to become more familiar with them. Let baby make a mess while learning to eat with fingers.

Let baby take the lead role

Allow baby to take the lead when eating. Wait for baby's mouth to open when you offer food.

Baby sets the pace

Let baby set the pace for eating. Feed as slowly or as quickly as baby wants. Stop feeding when baby shows signs of fullness. Never force baby to eat.



How much food does my baby need?

As a parent or caregiver you decide what foods are offered. Your baby decides if they are hungry and how much they will eat. Trust your baby to let you know when they are hungry and full.

Signs of hunger

- ▶ excited when put in the high chair
- ▶ sucks or smacks lips
- ▶ opens mouth at sight of food
- ▶ puts fist in mouth or cries
- ▶ leans forward or reaches for food

Signs of fullness

- ▶ turns head away at sight of spoon
- ▶ closes mouth at sight of spoon
- ▶ covers mouth with hands
- ▶ fusses or cries
- ▶ falls asleep





Learning healthy habits

Babies learn by watching people around them. Eating patterns and habits that babies learn early have a lasting effect on how a baby will grow and develop.

Be a healthy role model. When a family eats together, baby learns that meal times are a time for the family to come together and share. Offer baby a range of nutritious foods from your family meals. Let them discover different textures and experiment with feeding themselves.

A healthy feeding relationship

- ▶ Baby needs time to develop skills and explore the eating experience.
- ▶ Learn to trust and respect your baby's signs of hunger and fullness. Baby knows how much to eat.
- ▶ A baby's growth is the best indicator that baby is eating enough food.
- ▶ Baby may have to try a food at several different meals before baby decides it's good to eat.
- ▶ Keep eye contact with baby when they are eating and become familiar with what baby is telling you.
- ▶ When you learn to understand and respond to baby's signs for hunger and fullness you will help baby to understand their own feelings.



Every baby will like different foods and eat different amounts of food.

Stages of food texture in iron-fortified infant cereal

Starting out:
smooth



Later on:
lumpy



Other sources of iron

Meat source of iron:
minced chicken



Alternative source of iron: soft, cooked kidney beans

Vitamin C sources

Mango



Green beans



Iron-rich foods

Babies need iron for growth and development. Babies are born with iron stored in their bodies but these iron stores are used up by 6 months of age. This is why it is important to give baby foods that contain iron when you first start feeding solid foods.



Tips for feeding iron-rich foods to your baby:

- ▶ Add 1 new iron-rich food at a time.
- ▶ If offering purees, you can start with 1 to 2 teaspoons (5 to 10 mL) of food and gradually increase according to baby's appetite. Let baby decide how much to eat.
- ▶ Try beef, pork, lamb, veal, chicken, turkey, fish, wild meat, egg, tofu, legumes (split peas, beans, lentils) and iron-fortified cereal.
- ▶ Give fish without bones such as white fish, salmon and light canned tuna. Limit swordfish, shark, fresh or frozen tuna steak, canned albacore tuna, marlin, orange roughy and escolar to once per month because they are often high in mercury.
- ▶ Processed meats such as ham, bacon, wieners, salami, bologna or sausages are not the best choices for baby as they are low in iron, and high in salt. Consider these foods as "grown-up foods".

Babies need foods that are a good source of vitamin C, such as sweet potatoes, green beans, squash, broccoli and mango. Vitamin C helps our bodies use the iron from the foods that we eat. Vitamin C rich foods can be added after baby is accepting iron-rich foods.

Textured foods for baby: Starting with purees

When feeding baby, match the texture of food to baby's developmental stage and feeding cues. Use the ages listed below only as a general guideline because every baby is different and a baby may progress through these stages faster or slower than what is listed.

Age (months)	Baby's developmental stage	Food texture
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ holds head up ▶ sits with little help ▶ opens mouth when food is offered ▶ reaches out and is curious about food ▶ is able to take food from a spoon ▶ is able to move food to back of mouth with tongue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ strained ▶ pureed ▶ smooth ▶ mashed <p style="text-align: right;">Smooth green beans</p> 
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ can turn head away to refuse foods ▶ begins a chewing motion 	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ likes to finger feed ▶ can sit on own ▶ is starting to crawl 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ grated ▶ minced ▶ lumpy ▶ diced ▶ cut up <p style="text-align: right;">Minced peaches</p>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ can close mouth on cup rim ▶ sips from a cup with help ▶ shows interest in feeding themselves 	
10		
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ feeds self with fingers ▶ tries to feed self with spoon ▶ tries to hold cup when drinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ soft foods ▶ finely chopped
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ accepts 4 to 5 sips from cup ▶ bites and chews food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ foods that soften or dissolve in the mouth. Examples are dry, toasted-oat cereal and unsalted, whole wheat crackers.



Textured foods for baby: Finger foods

It is important for baby to try different textures.

This helps baby learn to chew, swallow and enjoy the same food the family is eating.

Babies may gag or spit out food when learning to eat. This is normal. Simply try offering the food at another meal.

Don't be discouraged.

At 7 to 9 months of age

Babies like to start to feed themselves. Encourage self-feeding and finger foods as soon as baby shows interest. Continue to offer some food on a spoon as baby learns to eat. If you wait too long to feed lumpy, solid foods it may be harder for baby to accept new textures of foods. It may also increase the risk of feeding difficulties later on.

At 12 months of age

Baby should be eating with the family and enjoying the same variety of healthy foods that the family is eating.

Almost any healthy food can be made into a good finger food, just make sure to cut the food into bite-sized pieces. Here are some ideas:

- ▶ soft ripe peeled fruit (banana, pear, peaches, plums, mango, cantaloupe, kiwi)
- ▶ soft cooked vegetables (carrots, sweet potato, turnip, zucchini, broccoli)
- ▶ dry toast strips
- ▶ shredded or cubed cheese
- ▶ tender cooked meat – cut up
- ▶ cooked beans and lentils
- ▶ tofu
- ▶ cooked pasta or cut up casserole

Baby-led weaning

Should I use baby-led weaning (BLW) to start my baby on solids?

Baby-led weaning is a type of feeding approach that allows your baby to feed himself soft-cooked, cut up finger foods right away.

Baby-led weaning is a different approach that allows:

- ▶ you to offer baby the same foods that the rest of the family is eating.
- ▶ baby to explore each food.
- ▶ baby to eat during the family meal.
- ▶ baby to decide when to bring a food to their mouth, the pace at which they eat, and when they feel full.

Choose the approach that feels most comfortable for you and your baby. You don't have to choose one feeding approach over another and you may want to try a combination of the pureed approach with the BLW approach.

Whatever approach you choose make sure there is someone with baby at all times when eating.

How many meals a day does baby need?

Remember

Parents are responsible for what foods are offered. Baby is responsible for how much they eat.

No two babies eat alike... some babies are very interested in food and may want more. Other babies are less interested and take a bite or 2. The following chart is just a guideline to help you plan meal times for baby.

At 6 to 8 months

▶ Offer 1 to 3 meals per day

At 9 to 11 months

▶ Offer 2 to 3 meals and 1 to 2 snacks per day between meals

At 12 months

▶ Offer 3 meals and 2 to 3 snacks per day between meals

What does a day of meals for a 9 month old look like?

In addition to breast milk

Morning meal



iron fortified infant cereal ½ cup or 125 mL



cut up peaches 2 to 3 tbsp or 30 to 45 mL



1 egg (hard boiled)

Mid-day meal



bread ½ slice



vegetables 2 to 3 tbsp or 30 to 45 mL



¼ small banana soft, cut up

Snack



1 ounce or 28 g cheese cubes



¼ cup or 60 mL dry cereal



small cup of water

Evening meal



pasta ¼ cup or 60 mL



soft cooked carrots 2 to 3 tbsp or 30 to 45 mL



chicken 1 to 2 tbsp or 15 to 30 mL



Breast milk or formula is the only food or drink your baby will need for the first 6 months.

Babies who are breastfed should get a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU (10 mcg) each day, year-round until 2 years of age. This will prevent vitamin D deficiency.

If your baby is not breastfed, or is only partially breastfed, commercial infant formulas are an alternative to breast milk. Non-breastfed infants do not require a vitamin D supplement because the infant formula contains vitamin D.

Drinks for baby

Milk

- ▶ The only food baby needs for the first 6 months of life is breast milk or formula.
- ▶ Babies still need breast milk or formula when they start eating solid foods.
- ▶ At 9-12 months, babies can be offered pasteurized, whole milk (3.25% MF) once they are eating a variety of iron-rich foods at most meal times. Baby will need to continue with this milk until baby is 2 years old.
- ▶ If baby is not eating a variety of foods that contain iron then do not start feeding baby whole milk (3.25% MF). Keep breastfeeding or using iron-fortified formula and continue offering iron-rich foods to baby.
- ▶ Lower-fat milks such as 2%, 1%, and skim do not have enough fat and energy for a baby. These milks are not recommended for babies under 2 years of age.
- ▶ Rice, almond and other milk substitutes should not replace breast milk, formula, or whole milk (3.25% MF) in the first 2 years. (Unless an allergy is suspected and a change is advised by your doctor). This is because they may not contain enough nutrients (including protein, healthy fat, vitamin D and calcium) to help baby grow and develop.
- ▶ Fortified soy beverages are not suitable as a main milk source for children younger than 2 years. For an older infant and young child who is no longer breastfed and is not being introduced to cow's milk, soy-based commercial infant formula is recommended until 2 years of age.



Water

After 6 months, begin offering water to your baby out of an open cup to quench baby's thirst. Baby will need help holding cup against the mouth at first and use the familiar suckling pattern. However, it is important for baby to develop mature drinking skills and avoid prolonged bottle feeding. If you think baby is thirsty, try offering a small amount of water (2 to 3 oz/60 to 90 mL).

Juice

Juice is not necessary for baby.

After 6 months, if you decide to give juice, choose 100%, unsweetened, pasteurized fruit juice and offer it in an open cup as part of a meal or snack. Diluting juice is not necessary. Babies should have no more than 2 to 4 oz (½ cup/125 mL) of juice a day. Juice should not be given in a bottle as this can lead to tooth decay (rotten teeth). Choose to offer fruits and vegetables instead.

Other

Drinks such as coffee, tea, herbal tea, pop, fruit drinks, lemonades, punches or sports drinks should never be given to babies.

Do babies need fat?

- ▶ Babies need a source of good fats for growth and development. Important fat sources include: whole fat milk products including yogurt, cheese and milk; meat, fish, poultry, avocado, nut butters and no-nut butters.
- ▶ Reduced fat and milk products with 0% milk fat should not be offered to baby.



Grown-up foods

Babies should be exposed to a variety of nutritious food choices. For the first year of life choose nutritious foods most often. Foods and drinks that are high in salt and sugar, and low in vitamins or minerals could be considered 'grown-up' foods and are not the best choices for baby- especially since many of these foods may also be choking hazards.

Examples of grown-up foods:

- ▶ french fries
- ▶ candy, chocolate and marshmallows
- ▶ pop and freezie/slushie type drinks
- ▶ ice cream, sweet desserts, sweetened gelatin
- ▶ pickles and olives
- ▶ processed meats like hot dogs/ weiners, bologna, salami
- ▶ snack foods such as chips, cheese/popcorn puffs
- ▶ sugar coated cereals
- ▶ dry or canned soups, canned pasta
- ▶ gravy, butter, margarine, salad dressing

However, as your child gets older and is able to choose foods independently, it will be important that these foods do not become "forbidden". The goal is to allow your child to feel relaxed and be matter-of-fact about all kinds of foods.



Honey

Due to the risk of infant botulism (food poisoning) a baby should not be given honey until they are over 12 months of age. Never add honey to an infant's food, water, formula or soother.

Avoid feeding baby baked goods made at home, such as muffins, pancakes, or bread, if honey was used as a sweetener.

Only give honey to healthy children over 1 year of age. By this age, children have developed helpful bacteria in their intestines that protect against *Clostridium botulinum* spores. Therefore, their risk of developing infant botulism is very low.



Choking hazards

Be cautious with certain textures. Your baby's chewing and swallowing skills will keep developing into their preschool years. Although it's normal for a baby to gag and spit out food while learning to eat, choking is dangerous. Avoid or modify foods that are choking hazards until the child is 3 to 4 years of age. Learn what to do if baby is choking. Have all emergency numbers saved in a convenient location.

Foods that may cause problems

What to do to make them safe

Foods that are stringy or chewy like meat, long pasta, or cheesy toppings

▶ Cut the food up into small pieces

Food that sticks to the roof of the mouth like cream cheese, cheese spread and nut butters

▶ Spread it thinly for your baby

Round or smooth foods like grapes or cherries

▶ Cut them into 4 parts and take out the pits or seeds

Foods like wieners or hot dogs

▶ Cut them lengthwise and then cut again into bite-sized pieces

Hard foods like raw vegetables or fruit

▶ Cook to soften them or grate them into tiny pieces

Hard candies, nuts, seeds, popcorn, fish with bones, or snacks with toothpicks or skewers, raisins and gum

▶ Do not give these foods to babies before they are 4 years old



Baby's teeth

Before teeth appear, wipe baby's gums with a soft cloth after each feeding and especially at night. As soon as baby's first tooth appears you can begin to brush baby's teeth twice a day and especially before bed. Use a small soft bristle tooth brush.

Lift baby's upper lip once a month to check teeth for early signs of tooth decay. White lines along baby's gum line could mean the start of tooth decay. Brown areas along baby's gum line can mean baby may already have tooth decay.

At 12 months you can use a small amount of fluoride toothpaste*, the size of a grain of rice. Fluoride toothpaste helps prevent cavities.

Have baby's teeth checked by a dental professional when baby is 1 year old.

*Ask a dental professional for specific fluoride recommendations.



Food can be prepared easily by mashing with a fork or potato masher or by using a food grinder, processor or blender.



Homemade baby food: Purees

Making your own baby food is a simple, nutritious and inexpensive way to feed baby. It allows you to offer textures that are just right for baby's needs and abilities.

There is no need to prepare large amounts of pureed baby food. Baby will progress quickly to more textured foods.

Baby will enjoy eating the same types of foods as the rest of the family. Remove baby's food portion if you are going to add sugar or sodium (salt) to the family meal.

Baby food can be made at each meal or ahead of time and stored in the fridge or freezer. See food safety tips on page 19.

Do not feed homemade baby food directly from the container. Put the amount of food baby will eat at 1 meal into a dish and feed from the dish. Throw out any leftover food in baby's dish after baby is finished eating.

Rice



Mashed peaches



Pureed green beans



Minced chicken



Recipes

Vegetable or Fruit Puree

Ingredients

Fresh or frozen fruit or vegetables

Method

1. Wash, peel and cut up fresh or frozen vegetables or fruit.
2. Using the stove: Place the vegetable or fruit pieces into a steamer in a small amount of boiling water and simmer until tender.
Using the microwave: Place vegetable or fruit in a microwave safe bowl with a small amount of tap water and heat at a high setting until the vegetables are tender, about 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Drain the vegetables or fruit, saving the cooking liquid.
4. Puree the vegetable or fruit with a small amount of the cooking liquid.
5. Serve baby their portion and freeze the remaining puree. See the food safety tips “chill” section on page 19.

Fruit and Yogurt Smoothie

Ingredients

½ cup (125 mL) frozen fruit
½ cup (125 mL) plain yogurt
½ cup (125 mL) whole milk (3.25% M.F.)*

Method

1. Place all ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth.
2. Pour ¼ cup (60 mL) to ½ cup (125 mL) into a cup for baby and place the remainder into a glass for yourself or someone else. Enjoy.

Alternative suggestion

Frozen Fruit and Yogurt Pops

1. Place ¼ cup (60 mL) of the fruit and yogurt puree into frozen treat molds.
2. Serve as a snack.

*Wait until 9 months to use.

Meat or Legume Puree

Ingredients

1 cup (250 mL) of cooked and chopped beef, wild game, chicken, turkey, fish (no bones), legumes or lentils.

Remove all fat and skin from meat before cooking.

2 to 4 tbsp (30 to 60 mL) liquid.
This can be breast milk, water, or cooking liquid from vegetables/fruit.

Method

1. Place chopped meat or drained legumes/lentils into a blender.
2. Add 2 tbsp (30 mL) of liquid and start to puree. Slowly add another 1 to 2 tbsp (15 to 30 mL) liquid until you have a smooth puree.
3. Serve baby their portion and freeze the remaining puree. Refer to the food safety tips “chill” section on page 19.
4. As baby grows older, increase the texture.

Store-bought baby food: Purees

If using store-bought baby food, here are some tips:

- ▶ Start with plain, single grain, iron-fortified infant cereals or a meat puree.
- ▶ Increase texture as baby gets older.
- ▶ Read the ingredients list. The main ingredient is listed first, and the least ingredient is listed last. Choose foods without added salt, sugar and little or no saturated fat and no trans fats (hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated).
- ▶ Make sure the safety seal is not broken. Do not use the food in the jar if you do not hear the lid pop, or if the safety seal button is up.
- ▶ Throw away any baby food that is past the “best before” date.
- ▶ Do not feed baby directly from the jar. Put the amount of food baby will eat at 1 meal into a dish, and feed from the dish. Throw out any leftover food from the baby’s dish after baby is finished eating.
- ▶ Casseroles and combination dinners may contain less meat than you expect. Choose a meat in broth. Examples are beef or chicken in broth.



**Unsweetered
applesauce**

**Pureed carrots,
peas and fruit**

Eating out with baby

You can enjoy a meal out with baby from time to time. Planning ahead will ensure baby has foods to eat no matter where you go. Before leaving the house, pack enough food for baby to cover the time you will be out. To be really prepared, pack a little extra in case you do not return home in time for baby's next meal. Use an insulated lunch bag containing a small freezer pack. This keeps food at a proper temperature and prevents it from spoiling.

Many foods in restaurants may not be suitable for baby but with careful planning you can order from the menu. Ask the server questions about ingredients used to prepare the meal and then select items appropriate for baby. Most restaurants have a microwave and may be willing to reheat baby's food.

Good choices to order from a menu include simple dishes like:

- ▶ broiled meats
- ▶ baked potato, pasta, rice
- ▶ steamed vegetables with no added salt or fat

These foods are easily mashed, minced or diced depending on the texture of food baby is currently eating.

Remember

Just eating together supports baby's learning and connection!



Tips for eating out with baby

- ▶ Bananas are the perfect pack-up-and-go fruit or try soft pieces of another fruit you can mash with a fork.
- ▶ Leftovers like cooked vegetables and/or meat can be cut into appropriate sized pieces, heated and placed in a thermos to maintain proper temperature.
- ▶ Pack small, reusable containers with a serving of yogurt or unsweetened applesauce.
- ▶ Take along dry, unsweetened cereal or unsalted, whole wheat crackers.
- ▶ Handy items to take with you include a bowl and spoon to feed baby, a fork for mashing food and a reusable cup for a drink of water, especially if you plan on sharing your food.

Check with the restaurant beforehand if you are able to bring in food from home to feed baby.



Food safety tips

Be clean

- ▶ Wash hands with warm, soapy water before preparing baby's food.
- ▶ Clean all surfaces and equipment with hot water and soap before and after preparing baby's food.
- ▶ Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water. Scrub fruits and vegetables that have a firm skin under running water.
- ▶ Wash your hands and baby's hands before eating.

Separate foods

- ▶ Separate raw meat, poultry, fish and eggs from foods that are ready to eat. This will help prevent the spread of bacteria.
- ▶ Use 1 cutting board and 1 set of utensils for raw meat, poultry, fish and eggs and another for ready-to-eat foods such as fruits, vegetables and breads. Wash cutting boards and utensils thoroughly after each use.
- ▶ Do not place cooked food on dishes that have held raw meat, poultry, fish or eggs.

Cook and reheat

- ▶ You can thaw food in the refrigerator, in a microwave or in a sealed container that is submersed in cold water. It is not safe to thaw food on the counter at room temperature.
- ▶ When cooking food for baby, make sure food is cooked to safe temperatures. Use a meat thermometer to test the temperature.

Ground meat and ground pork ▶ 71°C (160°F)

Ground poultry ▶ 74°C (165°F)

Egg dishes ▶ 74°C (165°F)

Fish ▶ 70°C (158°F)

Leftovers ▶ 74°C (165°F)

- ▶ Homemade baby food can be reheated in the microwave or in a double boiler. Be careful when heating in the microwave, as there are hot and cold spots. Stir and rotate the food often for even reheating.
- ▶ Avoid reheating food more than 1 time. If baby does not finish what is reheated the first time, throw the rest away.
- ▶ Always test the temperature of food before feeding baby. It should be luke warm, not hot.



Chill

- ▶ Prepared foods, including infant formula, should not be left at room temperature for more than 1 hour.
- ▶ Homemade baby food or commercially prepared baby food that has been opened may be kept in the fridge for up to 2 days.
- ▶ When freezing homemade baby food put it into ice-cube trays or drop spoonfuls onto a cookie sheet, cover and place in freezer. Once the food is frozen, empty the cubes or spoonfuls into a plastic freezer bag and label the contents with the name and the date the food was prepared.



Allergies

The Canadian Paediatric Society recommends that allergenic foods be introduced to high-risk infants* by around 6 months of age, but not before 4 months, and are guided by the infant's developmental readiness for food.

Common allergenic foods include:

- ▶ Cow's milk
- ▶ Eggs
- ▶ Peanuts
- ▶ Tree nuts
- ▶ Fish
- ▶ Soy
- ▶ Wheat

Allergenic foods can be introduced 1 at a time. This makes it easier to tell which food is the problem if your baby has an allergic reaction. Common allergenic foods should be regularly offered to baby to maintain tolerance.

***High-risk infants are babies with eczema or pre-existing food allergy, or babies with an immediate family history (first degree relative such as mother, father, brother or sister) of an allergic condition (e.g. eczema, food allergy, asthma)**

For infants at no or low risk of allergy, you can introduce allergenic foods starting at 6 months of age.

For more information about early introduction of allergenic foods, visit foodallergycanada.ca.

If you have concerns about food allergies you can contact Yukon HealthLine at 811.

Possible signs of an allergy are:

- ▶ A rash or hives
- ▶ Red and itchy skin
- ▶ Vomiting, diarrhea
- ▶ Trouble breathing or swallowing
- ▶ Swelling of the eyes, face, lips, throat and tongue

If you think baby has an allergy, do the following:

- ▶ Stop feeding the food you think caused the allergy. This is why it is so important to introduce only 1 new allergenic food at a time.
- ▶ Make an appointment with your baby's doctor.
- ▶ You may need to see a children's allergy specialist.

Babies who show severe or sudden allergy symptoms need immediate emergency care. If any of the following severe symptoms appear, take your baby to the nearest emergency department or Community Health Centre right away. Phone 911 if the symptoms start immediately or quickly become worse.

Signs include:

- ▶ Difficulty breathing
- ▶ Unable to swallow
- ▶ Swelling of the tongue or in the mouth
- ▶ Swelling inside the throat

Looking for more information?

Talk to your health care provider, Community Health Nurse or a Registered Dietitian.

Whitehorse Health Centre..... 867-667-8864
..... toll-free in Yukon 1-800-661-0408 ext. 8864
Outside Whitehorsecontact your Community Health Centre

Visit yukon.ca/en/find-hospital-or-health-centre for a list of health centres.

To speak to a Registered Dietitian Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. call 811

For information on Canada's Food Guide,
visit food-guide.canada.ca/en

Contact Health Promotion at
health.promotion@gov.yk.ca
or 867-667-3003

yukon.ca/en/nutrition



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