

# INTRODUCING SOLIDS

## BIRTH TO 6 MONTHS



- ▶ Babies should only be fed breastmilk or infant formula until around 6 months of age.
- ▶ Start solids when your baby is ready at around 6 months of age. Do not start solids before 4 months.
- ▶ Breastfeed until 12 months and then for as long as mother and baby are happy.
- ▶ Formula fed babies do not need formula after their 1st birthday, unless prescribed by a health professional.

## HOW DO I KNOW MY BABY IS READY FOR SOLIDS?

- ▶ Shows interest in food and people eating.
- ▶ Can sit up in a high chair.
- ▶ Can hold their head up on their own.
- ▶ Has lost the tongue-thrust reflex. This makes babies push food out with their tongue.



## HOW TO START...

- ▶ Start with iron-rich or iron-fortified foods first. A baby's iron stores start to decrease at around 6 months of age.
- ▶ Foods high in iron include meats (red meat is highest in iron), spinach, broccoli, lentils, beans and iron-fortified baby cereal.

### AROUND 6 MONTHS



pureed > mashed > chopped

### 8 MONTHS



Finger food

### 12 MONTHS



Family food

All of a child's nutritional needs should come from food by this age.

## TRYING NEW FOODS

- ▶ Your baby may not like a food when they try it for the first time.
- ▶ Your baby may need to try a food many times (15 to 18 times) before they like it.
- ▶ Remember to make meal times fun and relaxed. Never force your baby to eat. Give your baby praise when they try a new food.



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## WHAT SHOULD I AVOID?



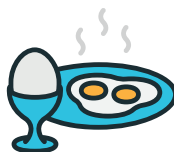
- ▶ Foods that babies can choke on such as hard fruits, raw vegetables, and small, hard foods like popcorn and whole nuts.
- ▶ Sugary drinks such as juice, cordial, tea, coffee and soft drinks.
- ▶ Foods such as cakes, chocolate and lollies
- ▶ Honey and raw eggs before 12 months.
- ▶ Cow's milk as a drink before 12 months (you can use a small amount in cooking or on cereal).
- ▶ Products that babies need to suck such as squeeze pouches. Use a spoon to feed your baby if feeding pouch foods.



## CHOKING



- ▶ Babies often gag when first starting solid food. Coughing and spluttering is normal.
- ▶ This happens less as your baby gets used to eating foods.
- ▶ Choking that prevents breathing is a medical emergency. Call 000.
- ▶ Never leave your baby alone while eating.
- ▶ Do not feed your child small, hard foods until they are 3 years old.



## ALLERGIES

- ▶ Try foods such as well-cooked egg, peanut butter and other high-allergen foods early on, even if there is a family history of food allergy. This can reduce the risk of your child developing an allergy.
- ▶ Babies should be fed these foods early and often and then continue to be offered them on a regular basis to reduce the risk of developing an allergy.
- ▶ Start with a small amount. Seek medical advice if you think your baby has a reaction after eating a food.

## USEFUL WEBSITES



- ▶ [www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the\\_guidelines/n56b\\_infant\\_feeding\\_summary\\_130808.pdf](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n56b_infant_feeding_summary_130808.pdf)
- ▶ [www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bf-info/weaning-and-introducing-solids](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/bf-info/weaning-and-introducing-solids)
- ▶ [www.preventallergies.org.au](http://www.preventallergies.org.au)