

# Infant Feeding



For the first six to nine months of life mother's milk is the only food required by most infants. The mother should be sure her nutritional needs are being adequately met, including continuation of good prenatal vitamins. It is at six months that there is some evidence that breast milk does not contain all of the vitamin needs of the child, specifically iron.

Until around the age of six months the baby's digestive tract is not able to adequately digest food. The maturation of the digestive is individual. Signs that the digestive tract is mature are teeth, or a weight of 17 pounds. A baby is usually ready for solid foods when he/she is able to sit up and is able to push food away. Another important sign is that the child is swallowing the food back instead of pushing it out with the tongue. At these points if a child is showing interest in food, introduction can begin.

Foods given too early may induce food allergies. New foods should be introduced one at a time for several days. Allergic reactions should be looked for. Signs of allergic reaction include:

- Rash around the mouth or anus
- Hyperactivity or lethargy
- Runny nose
- Skin reactions: urticaria ("hives"), eczema
- Diarrhea or mucus stools
- Redness of face and/or cheeks
- Black circles under eyes (allergic shiner)
- Dyslexia or behavioral changes

Water should be introduced as the first liquid once solids are introduced. Water can be given in a bottle or from a cup or spoon. The amount is based on the weight of the child: one third the body weight of the child in fluid ounces per day. For instance, an 18 pound infant would receive 6 ounces throughout the day. This is particularly important in winter and summer. However, if a baby becomes dehydrated, an electrolyte beverage should be used.

## Groups of Food

*The age is the earliest you would want to introduce the foods, in addition to breast milk.*

### 1<sup>st</sup> Group (6 months)

Egg yolks (soft boiled)  
Avocado  
Prunes  
Blackberries  
Applesauce  
Grapes – remove seeds and smash  
Pears  
Blueberries – given frozen while teething<sup>1</sup>  
Carrot – cooked and smashed  
Sprouts – blended in water  
Yams  
Beets  
Bananas  
Cherries – pit and smash

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Group (9 months)

Papaya  
Nectarines  
Apples  
Mashed potato  
Artichoke  
Cabbage  
String beans  
Peas  
Oatmeal  
Basmati rice  
Millet  
Lima beans

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Group (12 months)

Squash, asparagus  
Yogurt  
Swiss chard  
Parsnips  
Onion, garlic  
Tofu  
Spirulina, barley green  
Brown rice, barley  
Blackstrap molasses – small quantity for anemia

### 4<sup>th</sup> Group (18 months)

Garbanzo bean flour – for pancakes, muffins  
Greens – lettuce, beet greens  
Rutabaga and turnips  
Eggplant  
Buckwheat  
Rye  
Kelp  
Tahini  
Beans  
Lamb  
Chicken  
Fish  
Split peas

### 5<sup>th</sup> Group (21 months)

Wheat  
Orange  
Pineapple  
Brewer's Yeast  
Cashew butter  
Almond butter  
Walnuts  
Eggs  
Beef  
Salmon  
Turkey  
Lentils

### 6<sup>th</sup> Group (2-3 years)

Sunflower seeds  
Peanut butter  
Cottage cheese  
Soy – soy milk, etc  
Lamb liver – high in B12  
Duck  
Clams  
Honey

Common allergens include: cow's milk, egg white, peanuts, soy, corn, citrus, fish, and seafood. If introduced early (before 6 months), other foods can become clinically significant allergens. Therefore, foods should be introduced individually and gradually. Mixed foods containing a variety of food allergens should not be given unless tolerance to every ingredient has been determined.

<sup>1</sup> possible choking hazard – adjust timing according to your child's readiness