

Healthy Beginnings



I am ready for solids (six to 12 months of age)

Trust me. Trust my tummy.

I am ready to begin eating solid foods at about six months of age, when I can

- Hold my head up
- Sit up and lean forward
- Let you know when I am full
- Pick up food and try to put it in my mouth

I will show you I am interested in eating when I

- Lean forward and reach for food
- Open my mouth wide when food is offered

I will show you I am full when I

- Turn my head or face away
- Keep my mouth closed
- Lean back away from food

When I am eating

- I like to sit, talk and eat with you at mealtimes
- Put away electronics, like cell phones, tablets the television, so I can focus on eating
- I might like to eat from a spoon or feed myself. Let me show you what I prefer as I might like to do both
- Let me hold my own spoon. Encourage me to feed myself

Trust me to decide

- How much to eat
- Which foods to eat from the foods you offer
- When to eat

Your job is to

- Decide what foods to offer
- Seat me in a safe place when eating

I need a variety of healthy foods

- Offer me different textures such as
 - Pureed
 - Lumpy
 - Mashed
 - Ground or minced
 - Shredded
 - Cooked or soft, diced foods



- Remember that I do not need salt or sugar added to my foods
- Continue to breastfeed me for as long as we both want. You can breastfeed me before or after giving me solid foods
- Give me a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU daily if I am breastfeeding

I need iron-rich foods every day to help me grow and develop, such as

- Legumes (beans, lentils), tofu
- Eggs
- Beef, dark meat chicken, turkey, pork, fish
- Iron-fortified infant cereal



- Smooth nut and seed butters, thinly spread on toast or mixed into other foods, such as peanut, almond, sesame
- Vitamin C in vegetables and fruit to help my body absorb iron

I can try most new foods every day

- It does not matter what order I try them in
- A few foods are more allergenic than others. When you offer me these foods for the first time, offer only one per day and wait two days before offering another more allergenic food. These foods are
 - Eggs
 - Milk – wait until I am nine to 12 months old before offering me whole (3.25% M.F.) milk as my main source of milk
 - Milk products such as cheese or yogurt
 - Peanuts, tree nuts and sesame seeds and their butters, such as peanut butter, almond butter and tahini
 - Fish and shellfish
 - Soy such as tofu
 - Wheat

If you are offering me a more allergenic food for the first time

- Offer it earlier in the day in case an allergic response happens a few hours later
- Allergic responses, such as a rash, vomiting or diarrhea, can happen up to 24 hours after I eat the food. Talk to my doctor if this happens
- If I have a severe allergic response, including difficulty breathing, swelling of the tongue or throat, this will usually happen within 30 minutes. Call 911 right away

I can start drinking from an open cup

- It will take time and practice for me to learn
- Tap water is safe for me to drink
- I don't need fruit juice

My gums and teeth need care

- Clean my gums, inside of cheeks and roof of mouth with a clean, soft damp cloth every day
- As soon as I have teeth, brush them gently, at least twice a day, using a small, soft toothbrush and water
- Take me to the dentist for my first dental visit by my first birthday. My routine check-ups are important

Some foods are not safe for me and can cause me to choke

- Hard, small and round solid foods, such as whole grapes, raw carrots, apples, nuts, fruit with pits or hot dogs
- Sticky foods from a spoon, such as peanut butter

Make these foods safer for me

- Grate or cook raw vegetables
- Cut grapes in quarters
- Remove pits from fruit
- Remove sharp edges on foods

It is natural for me to gag

- It is normal as I learn to eat new textures
- It helps me to stop from choking

Honey can make me sick

- Wait until I am one year old before offering me honey, even honey used in cooking or baking

For more information and resources, including a short video on how to make your own baby food, visit york.ca/feedingkids

Speak to a registered dietitian at no cost by calling EatRight Ontario at 1-877-510-5102 or by going to Ontario.ca/eatright

To learn the signs of hunger and fullness in young children, watch [Trust me, Trust My Tummy](#)

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