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STARTING SOLIDS

At 4-6 months you can introduce solid foods so your baby can get used to new tastes and textures and a different mechanism of eating. Breast milk and formula are still the major sources of nutrition.

Offer solids at first between two regular feeds and at a time your child is most alert. Try only one new food at a time to rule out any allergies. Your child may reject a food a number of times before subsequently taking it eagerly. Give each new food 3-5 days interval before starting a new one. Start with one solid meal a day and then depending on how your child likes the solids, by 6 months you can progress to three meals per day.

Start with rice cereal: Mix 1-2 tablespoons with water, formula or breast milk. Offer it with a spoon. You can then try other plain cereals.

Try the stage one vegetables either together with the cereal meal or by itself, and then try the fruits.

At around 6-7 months you can introduce stage 2 or thicker purees and mixtures of foods.

At around 8-10 months if your child has a pincer grasp and can put food in their mouth, they may be ready for table food.

Examples are:

- Soft fruits - bananas, melons, pears, peaches, nectarines etc. All food must be cut into small pieces, skinned and seeded.
- Soft steamed vegetables in small pieces.
- Cheese, yogurt
- Breads, noodles, rice, crackers
- Small pieces of ground beef, turkey, chicken, lamb and pork.

AVOID all foods that are a choking hazard.

Examples are:

- Popcorn, hard candy, gum, peanut butter, seeds, nuts, hard fibrous fruits and vegetables, raisins and hotdogs.
- Avoid honey during the first year.

At age one; you can introduce whole milk and eggs. You can introduce eggs baked in food at around 9 months. Avoid fish and seafood until one year of age

There has been new research which indicated that introducing peanuts in the diet (in a non choking hazardous form) may lessen future peanut allergy.