

# Introduction to Solids

By Jennifer Autodore, RD and Mary Barbour, MS, MA, RD

Age	Readiness Signals	Foods to Add	Sample Foods and Feedings
• 0 – 4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sucking, suckling, &amp; swallowing</li> <li>• Tongue pushes out when solid food is in mouth</li> <li>• Putting fingers in mouth</li> <li>• Rooting (baby turns to nipple for nourishment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast Milk or Fe Fortified Formula w/DHA &amp; ARA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breast milk or formula.</li> <li>• Feeding occurs every 2-3 hours for a total of 24-32 ounces per day.</li> <li>• Newborns usually drink 2-3 oz. for each pound they weigh.</li> <li>• Timing for breast-feeding varies with each infant. Newborns often need to nurse on each breast.</li> </ul> <p>Before transitioning to single breast-feeding speak with a lactation consultant. A general guideline is 10-15 minutes on each breast.</p>
• 4-6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birth weight has doubled</li> <li>• Can sit with support</li> <li>• Good head control</li> <li>• Swallows better, drools less</li> <li>• Can close mouth around age appropriate spoon</li> <li>• Does not push food out with mouth or tongue</li> <li>• Can move food from front to back of mouth</li> <li>• Increased hunger</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fe Fortified Infant Rice Cereal mixed with breast milk or formula. Do not mix with juice.</li> </ul> <p>The addition of iron fortified rice cereal is recommended secondary to a decrease in iron stores beginning at 4 months of age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 – 4 Tablespoons of iron-fortified Infant Rice cereal mixed with breast milk or formula twice a day. Texture should be runny. Feed with a small baby spoon.</li> </ul>
6 – 8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning to chew soft foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After 7 months add cooked meat or egg yolk<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> <p>Strained, pureed, or mashed cooked vegetables Strained or mashed soft fruit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24-32 oz. breast milk/iron fortified formula per day.</li> <li>• Introduce one new food per week. 1-3 Tablespoons of meat or pro-tein source (tofu, egg yolk<sup>2</sup>) per day.</li> <li>• Offer vegetables first</li> <li>• 2 Tablespoons of vegetables and/or fruit twice daily. Avoid meat and vegetable combination meals</li> </ul>



8 – 10 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates the “pincer grasp” (using thumb and index finger to pick up objects)</li> <li>• Holds bottle without help</li> <li>• Ability to hold spoon with help</li> <li>• May drink from a sippy cup with help</li> <li>• Starts finger feeding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finely chopped meats</li> <li>• Soft cheese</li> <li>• Soft vegetables</li> <li>• Peeled/skin free bite sized fruit pieces that can be easily swallowed.</li> <li>• Cooked pasta</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24-32 oz. breast milk/iron fortified formula per day<sup>3</sup>.</li> <li>• 1/4 cup meat per day</li> <li>• 1/4 - 1/2 cup vegetables per day</li> <li>• 1/4 - 1/2 cup fruit twice per day</li> <li>• 1/4 - 1/2 cup iron fortified cereal per day</li> </ul>
10 – 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picks up food and feeds self</li> <li>• Drinks from a sippy cup without help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken, fish, meat, and eggs.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Whole milk at 12 months.</li> <li>• Try Whole Kefir milk<sup>4</sup> if your child declines whole milk, which may occur in</li> <li>• Egg whites can be introduced at 12 months of age.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Soft vegetables and</li> <li>• Breads, rice, and cereals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16-24 oz. breast milk/iron formula per day<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• whole / 2% milk based yogurt, cottage cheese starting at 12 months<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• 1/2 - 1 oz. chicken, fish, soft meats, eggs twice daily<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• 1/4 - 1/2 cup vegetables and iron fortified cereal 2-4 tsp. two to three times per day Whole grain bread, brown rice, or whole grain crackers</li> </ul>

If you believe your baby is ready to start solids speak with your pediatrician first. It is now recommended by the AAP to breast feed or bottle feed exclusively for the first 6 months of life. You may be wondering, how do I know that my baby is really ready to eat? Your first attempts at feeding may be quite challenging, even with something that seems small and easy like getting the food into the baby’s mouth. But don’t worry, as time progresses and your baby matures he or she will eat a variety of whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and meats. Be patient and proceed slowly. Allow your baby’s cues to determine when he or she is hungry or has had enough to eat.

<sup>1</sup> If you have a family history of food allergies, consider delaying introduction to solids until 6 months of age.

<sup>2</sup> The AAP recommends that infants with a strong family history of egg allergy wait until 24 months and for peanuts/nuts/fish/ shellfish until 36 months.

<sup>3</sup> Serve no more than 24 ounces of milk per day by one year of age. This will promote an increase in the amount of food your baby eats. Too much milk and too little food may lead to iron deficiency anemia.

<sup>4</sup> Kefir milk contains healthy bacteria that have been linked to immune system benefits.

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