

6-12 Months



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Setting the foundations for a life-long healthy diet

The weaning process is about introducing foods which will nourish your baby as milk becomes insufficient as a calorie and nutrient source. It is a gradual process where baby learns about new tastes and textures and not only how to eat them, but also how to digest and process them. It is therefore important to get the pace of introducing new foods right. Our attitudes to food are shaped not only by the flavour but by many other factors. How we introduce foods to our children may influence how they feel about food so make the whole experience positive. Show baby how you enjoy healthy foods and encourage them to try a variety of foods whilst they are enthusiastic for new things. It may take until baby is about 12 months before they are structured into three meals and two snacks a day and food has taken the place of milk from a calorie point of view.



Don't feel you need to push baby through each weaning stage as quickly as possible. Take it at your baby's pace and focus on the quality of food as well as the quantity. Choose the best quality food you can afford. Organic foods reduce the risk of adding a chemical burden to an immature body so are worthwhile where possible. Although it is not usually possible to make all baby's food from scratch, where this is possible it means the food is fresher so may be higher in nutrients and it is easier to vary the taste and texture. There is no harm however in buying good quality ready made foods when needed. As long as baby is getting a variety of healthy foods, and is growing well, it is likely they are getting all they need.



Another reason not to rush the weaning process is that some foods can aggravate the digestive system. Introducing foods too early may irritate the gut and make baby feel uncomfortable and apprehensive about foods and could even encourage infections, food sensitivities and allergies. This is more likely to be a risk if the parents or close relatives have food allergies or are Atopic and have eczema, asthma or hay fever.

When to start weaning

The UK Department of Health recommend babies are introduced to solid foods at six months. It takes six months for baby's kidneys and digestive system to develop enough to be able to deal with solid food. Baby also needs to be ready to learn the mechanics of eating such as being able to bite and chew. Babies who were born premature may need to be weaned later than six months and this would need to be discussed with the appropriate healthcare practitioner.

Signs that baby may be ready to wean

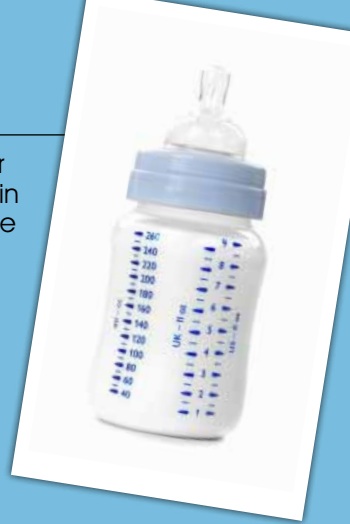
The general rule is wait until baby is six months. If you feel that baby needs to be weaned sooner discuss this with your healthcare practitioner first. Weaning should also not be delayed longer than six months unless there is a medical reason or baby was premature. To be weaned baby should usually be able to do the following:

- Be able to stay in a sitting position and hold their head up
- Be able to have enough hand to eye co-ordination to be able to pick up food and put it in their mouths
- Be able to swallow first foods. If baby consistently pushes all the food out of their mouth they may not be ready



Which milk?

If you are able to breastfeed this remains the best milk for baby at this stage of their development. It may be lower in some nutrients than formula but the nutrients are available in a natural and easy to absorb form and breast milk also has immune boosting agents. This immune support may not only help protect baby from infections but also reduce the chance of developing allergic reactions to foods. Breast milk also contains omega-3 fats which are needed for baby's continuing brain development. If you are not able to breastfeed then discuss which would be the best milk substitute with your healthcare practitioner. Ideally choose a formula with the omega-3 fat DHA added.



If baby does not react well to formula then discuss alternatives. Eczema can be a sign that baby is not doing well on cow's milk formula for instance and other formulas could be considered. Soya formula may be appropriate for some babies as may allergen-reduced formulas. Avoid milks which are not designed for babies such as dairy, soya, rice, oat and nut milks until baby is 12 months old and then look for versions with added calcium. Before this age they may be too low in calories and nutrients to support baby's development. Rice milk is generally not recommended until four and a half years old due to the potential arsenic content.

First foods

Make this key milestone a relaxed and happy one. Choose a day and time when you are not rushed. Give baby some milk, but not a full feed, so baby is relaxed but not full. Choose the time of day baby is most settled but ideally not just before a nap in case their food doesn't stay down. Many parents find late morning works well. Start the routine as you mean to go on by seating baby in a high chair or baby seat at the table so they get used to the routine of eating at a table and taking time for food. This supports digestion and helps them focus on their food.

Baby's style

There are two key styles of weaning. Puree weaning introduces baby to texture gradually and teaches baby to swallow before they learn to chew. Baby Led weaning (BLW) teaches baby to chew before they learn to swallow. There is no right or wrong way and there are potential benefits and drawbacks to both methods.

Puree weaning

Puree weaning gives baby foods which are easy to digest allowing more efficient nutrient absorption. It gradually moves baby on to more complex foods as the digestive system adapts. This weaning style is led by the adult feeding the child so do look for signs that baby is full to help prevent setting a tendency to overeat. Puree weaning may also confuse babies when they move onto whole foods as they may not see the whole food as familiar. Showing children the whole food which went into their puree may help them to expect that food as the weaning process develops. Teaching children from the start to recognise foods and continue to include them in their diets may be beneficial. If baby is having carrot puree for instance try also giving a stick of cooked carrot to play with and perhaps try to eat.

Choose first foods which are specially designed and fortified for babies such as fortified baby rice or millet. This has little flavour so it is only the new texture baby needs to get used to. Mix this according to the pack instructions with breast or formula milk warmed to body temperature. Give baby half a milk feed and then introduce the food. Just put a little on the end of a BPA-free baby spoon and be ready for the mess! Baby is likely to only eat a few spoons initially but prepare extra so they can touch the food and suck it off their fingers if they want to. After this mini meal give baby the rest of their milk.

Babies will take to weaning at their own pace and you will find out the best timing and way for your baby as you go along. Breast or formula milk is still the key food source and solid food will, over the next six months, take over from that as the key calorie and nutrient source. Once baby is used to a meal at lunchtime you can start to introduce a meal in the evening and then at breakfast. Or in a different order if this works best for you. Once three meals are in place you can add in snacks. Aim to have baby on three meals and two snacks a day by the time they are 12 months.



First Food Tips

- Baby is getting nourishment from their milk so don't worry if they only eat a little at first. If baby's weight gain slows down then discuss weaning with your healthcare practitioner
- First foods need to be baby suitable so start with baby specific foods until you are confident with what to feed your baby
- Continue to breastfeed every 3-4 hours or give about 900ml of formula each day and extra cooled boiled water as required
- Always check the temperature of food to make sure it is not too warm
- Let baby investigate, give them food to touch and their own spoon to handle
- Choose bowls, spoons, cups and storage containers that are free from potentially harmful chemicals such as BPA
- Set basic routines from the start such as set meal times and sitting at the table when at home. This helps keep baby's blood sugar levels and mood balanced, helps them focus on their food and may help reduce over-eating in the future. Sitting up straight is also less of a choking risk and supports digestion
- Always stay with your baby to ensure baby is safe

Variety and texture

Spend the first few weeks of weaning adding in new flavours then begin to focus more on increasing the texture of foods. Introduce thicker purees and soft lumps then as these are tolerated move to chopped foods. Finger foods such as carrots, cooked until they are soft, can be tried. Increasing texture is not only needed to keep stimulating baby's desire for variety but also aids speech development. The muscles used to suck, lick, bite and chew are the same ones used for speech and eating gets these muscles in training.



The weaning guide (on page 45) shows what order to consider when introducing new foods. After introducing a new food include that food in meals for 3 days before the next new introduction so you can check if there are any adverse reactions. When you are happy baby is fine with the new food you can mix it with another accepted food to increase variety of flavour.

Baby-led weaning

Traditional weaning starts babies on purees and moves on in stages to lumpy and then solid foods. The food is fed to baby and it is the adult who is in charge of the process. Baby Led Weaning (BLW) gives baby more control over the process as they are allowed to feed themselves. BLW babies learn to chew then swallow, puree fed babies to swallow then chew. A key potential benefit of BLW is it may help teach children appetite control as they are feeding themselves rather than being fed. Spoon feeding could start the process of mindless eating where we do not focus on what we are eating. It has been found that distractions such as TV can take out focus away from what we are eating and lead to over-eating.

Advocates of BLW believe that baby is more likely to stop eating when full and this could play a part in helping reduce the chance of obesity in later life. Concerns could be that baby will not get enough nutrients as less food is likely to be actually eaten until the art of chewing and swallowing is learnt. The food will also be less processed as it will be a while before baby can fully chew and so may be harder to digest. You will find out what works best for you and your baby.



Baby-led weaning explained

- Baby is offered a range of foods that they can choose and self-feed from
- Hard foods such as carrots would need to be cooked until soft enough to gum
- Baby can be offered a spoon but may not choose to use it
- Initial foods need to be big enough for baby to hold with a fist and still be able to see some of the food sticking out. As their motor skills develop they can pick up smaller foods
- Baby is more likely to gag on food as a natural reflex to prevent choking. If babies are fed purees first they may be more likely to gag on wholefoods when introduced as they expect to be able to swallow them
- As baby may not get so much food actually eaten at first there would be a greater reliance on breast or formula milk
- Baby is often offered the same food as the rest of the family but still avoiding potentially allergenic foods unsuitable for their ages and additives such as salt and sugar
- As baby is doing much of the work it will be messy so be prepared

Gagging reflex

All of us have a gag reflex to help prevent choking but in addition until about 4-6 months babies have a tongue thrust reflex which makes them automatically push their tongues forward when things touch the back of the throat. This helps protect babies from swallowing things they shouldn't but can make the introduction of food tricky for some as they initially push it back out.

- Avoid weaning before 6 months unless advised by your healthcare practitioner. By 6 months the reflex should be less strong
- Keep meal times relaxed and take feeding at baby's pace
- Put food on the tip of the tongue and allow baby to suck the food off at a pace they can manage rather than put the spoon fully in the mouth

- When baby shows signs that they are full avoid trying to get them to continue to eat
- Always watch babies when feeding especially when feeding themselves to make sure they don't choke
- Introduce new textures gradually
- If baby is vomiting when gagging check with your GP

Which foods to introduce when

Foods should be introduced in order of their easiness to digest and their least risk of being allergenic. If either of the parents, or in baby's genetic history, there are environmental or food allergies then it may be wise to introduce potentially allergenic foods later. If the child's immediate family are Atopic and have asthma, eczema or hay fever then you may wish to discuss when to trial potentially allergenic foods like peanuts with your healthcare practitioner. It is also safer to avoid peanuts when breastfeeding.

Please refer to the weaning guide on page 45 for more details.



Food allergies

Some food allergies can cause anaphylaxis and can be life threatening so if baby's lips swell, they get a sudden rash or have any trouble breathing seek medical treatment immediately.

Symptoms of a potential food allergy

- Swollen lips or throat
- Itchy throat or tongue which may cause a cough
- Wheezing
- Skin rash
- Diarrhoea or vomiting

Most common food allergies

- Cow's milk
- Eggs
- Wheat
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Fish and shellfish



Food intolerances

Some foods can cause delayed symptoms and may trigger a food intolerance or sensitivity. This is not life threatening but the reaction may increase over time. Introducing only one new food at a time may help you spot food sensitivities. Blood testing can be done over the age of two years.

Symptoms of a potential food intolerance

- Skin rashes
- Runny or blocked nose
- Eczema
- Loose stools
- Feeling unwell after foods and becoming a fussy eater



Food to avoid at this stage

- Added salt. Babies get all the salt they need from breast or formula milk and their kidneys are not ready to cope with more
- Added sugar. Fruits provide enough sweetness for babies and adding more may put them off savoury foods reducing their variety of foods and nutrients. It can also lead to tooth decay
- Sweetened drinks and fizzy or caffeinated drinks. Milk or boiled cooled water once baby has had their milk are the best drinks
- Honey should be avoided until one year old due to potentially harmful bacteria
- Nuts and other small hard foods due to choking risk. They should also be avoided if the parents have allergies
- Artificial food additives such as colourings or preservatives
- Low fat varieties of foods such as dairy products as they may be too low calorie
- Deep-fried foods
- Fish which may be high in mercury such as fresh tuna, shark, swordfish and marlin. This can affect development of the brain and nervous system
- Raw shellfish as it has a higher risk of food poisoning
- Some foods are probably fine but you may consider a later introduction. These are noted in the weaning guide and include foods such as citrus fruits and nightshades. Some babies do not react well to these foods if introduced too early



How much and how often to feed

Baby will start on just a couple of teaspoons of food and build up to three balanced meals and two snacks a day. As baby progresses through the weaning stages work towards main meals including each of these food groups:

A starchy carbohydrate such as oats, rice, sweet potatoes, pastas and breads

A protein and fat-rich food such as beans, lentils, tofu, fish, meat and eggs. If the protein is naturally low fat such as beans, lentils and tofu also include a fat such as gently frying in olive or rapeseed oil or adding ground nuts or seeds. Hemp or flax oil added cold to foods is ideal to add if baby doesn't eat fish.

Vegetables and fruits - include orange or red and green varieties each day.

How much baby eats will vary, look at how much is being eaten over the week rather than each day as appetites will differ according to many things baby is not yet able to express. It can take many attempts for babies to accept a new flavour so after 3 days of giving baby a new food to taste if it is still rejected stop for a few days then try again.



The following table gives a rough idea of how much baby may be eating through the following six months. If baby wants more food than this and they are not overweight then give more. Once baby is having three meals a day you can add snacks and may find baby eats less at meals.

Age	Meal	Food Type	Spoons of Food
First Foods	Mid morning / Lunch	Baby cereal	1-2 teaspoons
By 7 months	Lunch	Baby cereal	2 tablespoons +
	Dinner	Baby cereal	2 tablespoons +
		Vegetables & fruits	2 tablespoons +
By 8 months	Breakfast	Cereal	2-4 tablespoons
	Lunch	Vegetables & fruits	2-3 tablespoons
		Starchy carb such as mashed brown rice	1-2 tablespoons
		Protein such as lentils	1-2 tablespoons
	Dinner	Vegetables & fruits	2 tablespoons
		Yogurt with fruit	2 tablespoons
By 12 months	Breakfast	Cereal with ground seeds and fruit	4-6 tablespoons
	Lunch	3 types of vegetables such as 2 cucumber and 2 pepper sticks and 1 medium steamed brocolli floret	3 tablespoons
		Starchy carb such as wholemeal bread	1 small slice
		Protein such as houmous or cheese	2 tablespoons
	Dinner	3 types of vegetables	3 tablespoons
		Starchy carb such as buckwheat pasta in tomato sauce or mashed sweet potato	2-3 tablespoons
		Protein such as meat, fish or beans	1-2 tablespoons
		Yogurt with fruit	2 tablespoons

Safe food

Babies are more vulnerable to picking up infections and becoming ill from bacteria in food than adults so extra precautions are needed to keep them safe.

- Ensure all cleaning agents used on food surfaces are food safe
- Wash your hands well before preparing food or drinks for baby. There is no need to sterilise feeding bowls and spoons but do keep sterilising bottles if using
- Home made baby food which will not be eaten at the meal it is prepared can be cooled and kept in the fridge for up to 24 hours or frozen if appropriate
- Defrosted foods should not be re-frozen once defrosted
- Store freshly prepared foods in the fridge in a lidded container with a label so you can ensure it is not eaten if over 24 hours old
- Food should be heated until hot and then allowed to cool before feeding. Always test the temperature of food before giving to baby, stir well to help avoid hotspots of food which could scald baby
- Food left over from baby's meal cannot be kept and reused as it may have been contaminated with bacteria during feeding
- Avoid plastics which contain Bisphenol A (BPA) for preparing, food storage and feeding baby. This is especially important with foods high in fat such as baby milk and acidic foods such as tomatoes as they can lead to the potentially harmful chemical leaching into the food. BPA free bottles, bowls and storage containers are available



The key nutrient needs

Relative to their size babies have a higher need for both calories and nutrients. Babies are born with nutrient stores which, along with breast milk (or formula), provide them with all they need for the first six months. After six months these stores become depleted and food is needed, as well as milk, to keep nutrient levels topped up. Babies' stomachs are ten times smaller than those of adults so the diet needs to be calorie and nutrient dense and feeding little and often. Baby's ability to feed and digest progresses over time and as this happens the amount of milk they need will lessen as food takes over. Fat has almost twice as many calories per gram compared to carbohydrates and proteins so low-fat versions of fat-rich foods are not recommended at this stage. Don't however be tempted to load in the calories at the expense of the nutrients. To get the vitamins and minerals they need babies and toddlers need to have a variety of fruits, vegetables, starchy carbohydrates, protein and fat sources. Wholegrain starchy carbs can fill up small stomachs too quickly but have significantly more than 15 different vitamins and minerals compared to their white processed alternatives. So rather than exclude these nutrient dense foods ensure high fat foods are also included such as avocados and ground seeds and nuts (at the appropriate stage of weaning).



The table below shows the key vitamins and minerals babies need. Some of the foods sources which baby may be likely to eat are shown. These should only be included at the appropriate stages of weaning. Breast

and formula milk will also be good sources of many of these nutrients. Levels of some of the key nutrients can however still be insufficient so the UK Department of Health recommends that all children from six months to five years old are given supplements, in the form of vitamin drops, which contain vitamins A, C and D. Consider a supplement such as Vitabiotics Wellkid Baby Drops, which contains 16 carefully balanced nutrients including the recommended vitamins A, C and D.



Nutrient	What it does	Food sources
Vitamin A	Contributes to the maintenance of normal vision, skin and immune system functioning.	Oily fish Cheese and butter. Carotenes (which are converted to vitamin A): dark green leafy vegetables, carrots, sweet potatoes and broccoli. A supplement is recommended.
B vitamins, including folic acid	Vitamin B12 and B3 contributes to normal functioning of the nervous system and contributes to the normal function of the immune system. Folic acid contributes to the normal function of the immune system and normal blood formation.	Green vegetables, brown rice, chick peas and fortified cereals are a good source of folic acid. The other B vitamins are found in whole grains, brown rice, bananas, beans, eggs, meat, poultry and fish.
Vitamin C	Vitamin C increases iron absorption and contributes to the normal function of the immune system.	Fruits and vegetables including: peppers, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, berries, oranges and kiwi fruit. A supplement is recommended.
Vitamin D	Needed for normal growth and development of children's bones.	It is made by the action of sunlight on the skin but in the UK not in enough quantity to support a baby's rapid bone development. Food sources include oily fish, eggs and fortified breakfast cereals. Vitamin D occurs in few foods so a supplement is recommended.
Vitamin E	Contributes to the protection of cells from oxidative stress.	Vegetable oils, cereals and grains. Ground nuts and seeds.
Vitamin K	Contributes to normal blood clotting.	Green leafy vegetables and broccoli.
Calcium	Needed for normal growth and development of children's bones.	Dairy and fortified plant milks, cheese and other dairy foods. Green leafy vegetables. Soya beans and tofu. Nuts.
Iron	Contributes to normal oxygen transport in the body. Contributes to normal cognitive development of children.	Red meat. Iron-fortified cereals. Plant sources are lower in iron but tend to come along with vitamin C which aids absorption. Good sources include: greens, spinach, tofu, broccoli and lentils.
Zinc	Contributes to the normal function of the immune system.	Meat and fish. Cheese and eggs. Pulses. Wholegrain cereals.

Vegetarian and vegan diets

There is no reason why a vegetarian or vegan diet cannot provide enough nutrients for baby's needs. As with all children from 6 months to 5 years a supplement including vitamins A, C and D is recommended, such as Vitabiotics Wellkid Baby Drops. In addition for vegan children a vitamin B12 supplement is advisable. It is also important to ensure baby gets enough calories as many of the animal foods are high in fat so are high calorie providers. Plant based fats from avocados, ground nuts and seeds and seed oils and butters (still avoiding peanuts) are high in calories and provide healthy fats for baby's development. It is also important to ensure baby gets enough protein so beans and pulses need to be a daily food. Ground nuts and seeds also produce valuable protein when they are safe to be introduced. For vegan babies over 12 months choose plant milks such as soya and oat which have been fortified with calcium. If you are concerned discuss baby's diet with a nutritional therapist or dietician to ensure all baby's needs are covered. There are also good books such as 'Feeding your vegan infant with confidence' by Sandra Hood available and the Vegetarian and Vegan Societies can provide up to date information.



Tips for fussy eaters

- Look at what your baby eats over a week rather than each day as appetites vary.
- If your baby isn't eating much ensure they are hydrated and having the recommended amount of milk and additional boiled cooled water if more fluids are needed.
- Try offering half the milk feed, then food, then the rest of the milk feed to help prevent baby not having enough appetite for food.
- Have baby regularly weighed to check that they are gaining weight as they should. If they are not then seek the advice of your healthcare practitioner.
- Involve baby in the preparation of foods where possible. Try some water play with a bowl of water and whole vegetables so they can get used to how they look and feel. Always watch to make sure baby is safe.
- Have approximate set times for meals so baby starts to get into a pattern and is hungry enough to eat but not so hungry that they are irritable.
- Feed baby at the table when at home so they are getting signals about what will happen next. For meals out and about seat baby in a high chair where possible or at a safe position in the buggy.
- Set a positive example, showing your baby that you are eating some of the food you are expecting them to eat.
- Keep meal times relaxed. Present food in fun ways if needed but avoid toys or distractions such as TV at meal times as this doesn't develop children's understanding and acceptance of food and can lead to mindless eating and future weight problems. At this age the newness of food itself is usually enough of a distraction. If baby really doesn't want the food then take it away and try again at the next meal opportunity.



- Regularly offer a taste of foods you want your baby to eat but also have accepted foods as part of the meal. It often takes 10-15 tries for children to accept new flavours so give them plenty of opportunities to try. Do keep presenting refused foods as even one spoon can help baby acquire a taste for the food. If after 10-15 tries over a month they still don't like the food stop the food and try again a month later.
- Offer a range of flavours and age-appropriate textures at each meal as appetites increase with variety. Freezing home-made baby foods can make this easier to achieve.
- Offer savoury foods before sweet as most babies prefer sweet foods and could refuse the savoury if they know sweet is on offer.
- Resist the temptation to feed baby foods you think they may like but they don't yet know exist such as foods with added sugar or salt. Simply trying foods for the first time is enough of an enticement. If baby gets a taste for sugar it is likely to make it even harder to get them to eat the variety of healthy foods they need.

The role of supplements for mum & baby

Some nutrients can be difficult to obtain on a daily basis even with a good diet so the UK Department of Health recommends that all children from six months to five years old are given supplements, in the form of vitamin drops, which contain vitamins A, C and D*.

Some babies will take longer to introduce a good variety of foods, some may be reluctant to try new tastes and textures and some may just have small appetites. This can make it harder to get all the ideal foods and nutrients in and make parents concerned that their baby is not getting all they need. It is important to take weaning at baby's pace and keep it happy and positive. Life also varies and through life there will be some days of ideal diet and others where other activities simply got in the way of this. A broad spectrum baby vitamin and mineral formula containing a range of nutrients rather than just vitamin A, C and D, can help provide your baby with some health insurance and give parents some piece of mind. Broad spectrum supplements may also be more effective as they may come closer to replicating the complicated natural synergy between different nutrients that we find in food. Consider a supplement such as Vitabiotics Wellkid Baby Drops. It is ideal for babies aged 1 to 12 months and provides a safe and comprehensive range of 16 nutrients, including essential vitamins and minerals. The formula contains vitamin A, C and D as recommended by the Department of Health for babies aged six months onwards.

Weaning chart

The following chart gives you an idea of which foods to introduce each month. Some foods are avoided early on as they have a greater tendency to trigger allergic reactions or food sensitivities, others because they are hard to digest or not yet safe from a potential food poisoning point of view. The new foods to introduce suggestions each month help you stagger the introduction of foods so you only introduce a new food every 3 days and check for any adverse reactions. All babies are different and some will be fine with foods being introduced at a faster rate and some babies may need to take it slower. Of course not all foods are listed so whilst avoiding the potentially problematic foods at the appropriate stages give baby as much variety as possible.

Babies age in months	New foods to introduce	Foods to avoid	Texture	Drinks	Notes
First Foods	Baby rice for 3 days then baby millet if no adverse reactions	Gluten (<i>wheat, rye, barley & oats</i>) Eggs Nuts, seeds and their oils Fish and shellfish Soya-based products Honey Cows, goats and sheep's milk and products Nightshade vegetables: White potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and aubergine Citrus fruits Berries Meat Salt Added sugar	Smooth. Mix with baby milk (<i>breast or formula</i>) to a smooth thick-milk consistency	Baby's milk need will vary with their size and age. Breast milk is still ideal as it offers immune support. Formula milk can be calculated at 150-200mls per kg of bodyweight Offer baby milk every 3-4 hours, baby should be having from about 900mls a day on top of first foods. Dairy milk is not a suitable alternative till 12 months all other drinks especially fizzy and caffeinated should be avoided	
6 months plus	Baby cereal mix such as rice, millet and quinoa Yellow and orange vegetables and fruits e.g. butternut squash, sweet potato, carrots, banana, melon, stewed apple, apricot and pear Avocado Green vegetables e.g. broccoli, peas, courgettes and spinach and broccoli	Gluten (<i>wheat, rye, barley & oats</i>) Eggs Nuts, seeds & their oils Fish and shellfish Soya-based products Honey Cow's, goat's & sheep's milk and products Nightshade vegetables: white potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and aubergine Citrus fruits Berries Meat Salt Added sugar	Smooth purees. Can offer sticks of vegetable such as carrot which has been cooked till soft.	Offer baby milk every 3-4 hours, baby should be having from about 900mls a day Can start to have sips of boiled water from a cup	Yellow and orange fruits and vegetables are generally easier to digest than green so introduce first. Peel, cook and puree hard vegetables. Try adding vegetables before fruits to reduce the chance of the less sweet foods being rejected. Can mix vegetable purees with baby rice if baby prefers. Avoid un-soaked dried fruits as they can stick to teeth and cause decay

Babies age in months	New foods to introduce	Foods to avoid	Texture	Drinks	Notes
7 months	<p>Increase variety of vegetables and fruits e.g. papaya (no seeds), mango, peaches and plums</p> <p>Include fibrous vegetables such as parsnips, swede and yam</p> <p>Cooked and mashed brown rice</p> <p>Start with lowest gluten grain, avoiding wheat still. Start with oats and progress to rye and barley</p> <p>Lentils; red are the easiest to start on as they break up with cooking. Progress to other types</p>	<p>Wheat</p> <p>Eggs</p> <p>Nuts, seeds and their oils</p> <p>Fish and shellfish</p> <p>Soya-based products</p> <p>Honey</p> <p>Cows, goats and sheep's milk and products</p> <p>Nightshade vegetables: white potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and aubergine</p> <p>Citrus fruits</p> <p>Berries</p> <p>Meat</p> <p>Salt</p> <p>Added sugar</p>	<p>Graduating to lumpy and mashed. No need to cook soft fruits such as peach & pear. May be better to peel to prevent choking.</p>	<p>Offer baby milk every 3-4 hours, baby should be having from about 900mls a day.</p> <p>Can have sips of boiled tap or filtered water from a cup.</p>	<p>Help baby experiment with flavours by mixing fruits and vegetables once they have been introduced</p> <p>No need for baby cereal at lunch and dinner</p> <p>Gluten can cause gastrointestinal symptoms in people with sensitivity, if baby has an adverse reaction remove gluten foods at this stage. Oats do not have gluten but are often contaminated with gluten in processing. Gluten free oats could be introduced earlier.</p> <p>Ensure lentils are well cooked</p>
9 months	<p>White fish</p> <p>Eggs. Give well cooked</p> <p>Tofu and soya products</p> <p>Ground nuts and seeds, add sesame last and avoid peanuts</p>	<p>Peanuts</p> <p>Raw or lightly cooked eggs</p> <p>High mercury fish: shark, swordfish, marlin and tuna</p> <p>Honey</p> <p>Un-pasteurised dairy products and blue cheeses</p> <p>Nightshade vegetables: white potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and aubergine</p> <p>Citrus fruits</p> <p>Berries</p> <p>Salt</p> <p>Added sugar</p>	<p>Coarsely chopped.</p> <p>More soft finger foods.</p>	<p>Milk may go down to about 720mls a day, feeding every 4-5 hours.</p> <p>Can have tap or filtered water from a cup (no need to boil) Well diluted (8 parts water) fruit juices can also be given occasionally but only with meals to help prevent damage to teeth</p>	<p>Omega-3 eggs from seed fed hens provide a valuable source of brain-building DHA</p>
10 months	<p>Oily fish e.g. mackerel and salmon, plichards, and sardines – not smoked fish</p> <p>Lean red meat, ideally organic</p> <p>Black-eyed beans, brown lentils, pinto beans, chickpeas and mung beans</p> <p>Prunes and dried apricots – soaked</p> <p>Coconut</p>	<p>Peanuts</p> <p>Raw or lightly cooked eggs</p> <p>High mercury fish: shark, swordfish, marlin and tuna</p> <p>Honey</p> <p>Un-pasteurised dairy products and blue cheeses</p> <p>Nightshade vegetables: white potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and aubergine</p> <p>Citrus fruits</p> <p>Berries</p> <p>Salt</p> <p>Added sugar</p>	<p>Gradually increase texture</p>	<p>Milk may go down to about 720mls a day feeding every 4-5 hours</p> <p>Can have boiled water from a cup</p>	<p>Gradually introduce different beans and pulses.</p> <p>Avoid high mercury fish and ensure there are no bones in fish</p> <p>Only give dried fruit in the same quantity as you would give if fresh to avoid bloating and wind and soak before giving to help avoid tooth decay</p>

Babies age in months	New foods to introduce	Foods to avoid	Texture	Drinks	Notes
12 months	Ground nuts and seeds and nut butters (expect peanuts and peanut butter) Honey Corn Nightshade vegetables: White potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and aubergine Strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, kiwi, grapes, lychees, figs and dates citrus fruits	Raw or lightly cooked eggs High mercury fish: shark, swordfish, marlin and tuna Un-pasteurised dairy products and blue cheeses Salt Added sugar	Gradually move towards more whole foods	Milk may go down to 500-600mls a day Whole dairy milk, ideally organic, can now be given Soya, oat and nut milks can also be given, ensure they have added calcium	Avoid whole nuts as choking hazard until baby has more teeth and chews well. The UK government recommends whole nuts are avoided until 5 years.
12 months plus	Shellfish Peanuts (ground or as butter) if no family allergies. If concerned wait until 3 years and check with your GP	Raw or lightly cooked eggs High mercury fish: shark, swordfish, marlin and tuna Un-pasteurised dairy products and blue cheeses Salt Added sugar	Gradually move towards more whole foods	Milk may go down to 500-600mls a day	If giving shellfish ensure it is well cooked.



**Unless they are drinking 500ml (or approx. 1 pint) of infant formula a day, as infant formula has vitamins added to it. (Source: Healthy Start)*

Disclaimer

This information is not intended as a substitute for medical advice. If you have any concerns about your babies health or diet please consult your registered healthcare practitioner.

6-12 Months Q&A



How long should I breastfeed for?

The UK Government recommends exclusively breastfeeding for at least the first six months and the World Health Organisation recommends that breastfeeding continues for two years of age or beyond.



When should I start weaning my baby?

Babies should be weaned at 6 months. Before this is not advised as their digestive systems are likely to be too immature to properly process the food, and it shouldn't be much later than this as milk would no longer be providing all the necessary nutrients at this stage. Some babies will be weaned earlier and some later than this but this should only be on the advice of your doctor.



How much should my baby eat?

It really will vary, how much babies and toddlers need depends on their size, age and activity level. Follow the suggested amounts for each age stage in this guide. Once your child is indicating they have had enough avoid trying to keep coaxing them into more but do offer food and drinks at regular times through the day.



When should I introduce different foods?

Baby's digestive and immune systems need to be ready for foods so avoid starting weaning before 6 months unless you have been advised to do so by your healthcare practitioner. Some foods have more potential for allergic reactions so the weaning section of this guide (page 45) suggests which foods to introduce in what order. Only introduce one new food at a time and give this along with previously eaten foods for three days before the next new food to check if there are any adverse reactions.



Do I need to give my baby a supplement?

Some nutrients can be difficult to obtain on a daily basis even with a good diet so the UK Department of Health recommends that all children from six months to five years old are given supplements, in the form of vitamin drops, which contain vitamins A, C and D. Try a supplement such as Vitabiotics Wellkid Baby Drops. It is ideal for babies aged 1 to 12 months and includes the recommended vitamins, A, C and D.

