

# Eating well: the first year

A guide to introducing solids and eating well up to baby's first birthday





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## **Eating well: the first year. A guide to introducing solids and eating well up to baby's first birthday**

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**This resource is provided for information only and individual advice on diet and health should always be sought from appropriate health professionals.**

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### **Photo resources**

For more information about photo resources to support good nutrition from pre-conception to five years, see the website [www.firststepsnutrition.org](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org)

### **First Steps Nutrition Trust**

The Food Exchange  
New Covent Garden Market  
London SW8 5EL

[www.firststepsnutrition.org](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org)

E: [vicky@firststepsnutrition.org](mailto:vicky@firststepsnutrition.org)

Registered charity number: 1146408

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# Introduction

**T**his resource provides some key information about feeding in the first 6 months of life, and shows the sorts of foods to introduce to infants at around 6 months of age, and the amounts of different foods that, alongside breastmilk or infant formula, will meet the nutritional needs of infants aged up to 12 months.

## Why have we produced this resource?

This visual resource illustrates how the dietary needs of infants from 6 months to 1 year can be met. Infants need enough energy (calories) to grow and be active, and enough nutrients (protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals) to ensure that they remain healthy, fight infections and learn effectively. Experts have calculated the amount of energy and the amounts of individual nutrients that they think infants need. These are known as 'dietary reference values'. This resource gives information on how the dietary reference values for infants can be met in practice as babies have food, alongside breastmilk or formula milk, in the first year of life. At this age it's important to introduce a range of tastes and textures, and allow infants the opportunity to feel, taste and recognise foods and flavours and to move towards eating patterns that will ensure they enjoy a healthy second year of life and beyond.

## What does this resource contain?

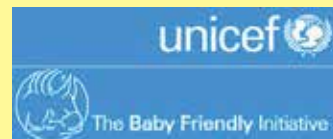
The resource contains:

- Information about how eating is part of an infant's developmental journey
- a summary of the key principles of eating well for infants up to the age of 12 months, and
- some example meals and finger foods to show how the dietary needs of infants can be met.

## Who is it for?

This resource has been designed for health and social care workers who support infants to eat well. This includes midwives, health visitors, child carers, family and children's centre workers, nursery nurses, dietitians, registered public health nutritionists, public health teams, community food workers, GPs and paediatricians, dentists and oral health teams.

The Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative is designed to support breastfeeding and parent infant relationships by working with public services to improve standards of care. This resource can be used by health workers in any setting that has been accredited as Baby Friendly. For more information about the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative, see [www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly)





## The first 1000 days

The first 1,000 days – that is, the nine months of pregnancy and the first two years of the baby's life – are seen as a critical window of opportunity to get food and nutrition right for every individual around the world. The nutrition of women and children in developed countries is as important as anywhere else and many parents appreciate this period as one where they can make the most important contribution to their child's healthy future. The concept of the first 1,000 days – along with clear information about how good nutrition can be provided during this time – is useful for those supporting families.

## Healthy Start

Healthy Start is the name for the welfare food scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Scotland has a similar scheme, called Best Start Foods. These schemes aim to improve the diets of pregnant and breastfeeding women, and children up to 4 years of age, in low-income families. All pregnant women under the age of 18 years are also eligible for the scheme.

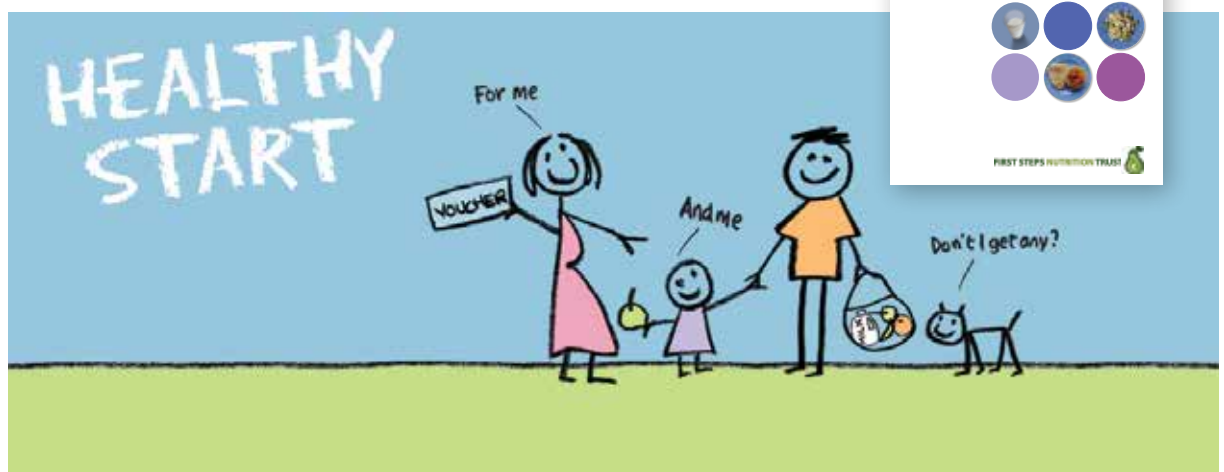
All pregnant women and new mothers on the Healthy Start scheme are given a Healthy Start card, with which they can collect free Healthy Start vitamins which contain folic acid and vitamin D to help prevent spina bifida and rickets in babies, and vitamin C for general good health. Women who are supported by the Healthy Start programme are eligible to receive free Healthy Start vitamins during pregnancy and until their child is one year old. These are designed to be suitable for breastfeeding women. All Healthy Start vitamins are suitable

for vegetarians and halal diets, and are free from milk, egg, gluten, soya and peanut residues.

Families eligible for Healthy Start can also use their Healthy Start card to collect vitamin drops for children. The children's vitamin drops contain vitamins A, C and D. These can be used from birth if babies are breastfed or if they have less than 500ml of infant formula a day, and are recommended for all children from one year up to their fifth birthday.

Both Healthy Start (from October 2020) and Best Start Foods provide a card with money on it that can be spent on fresh, frozen or canned fruit and vegetables including pulses (without salt or sugar added), dried pulses, cows' milk or first infant formula. You can also buy eggs as part of the Best Start Foods scheme. For more information on Healthy Start see [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk). For more information on Best Start Foods see <https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods>

For a practical guide on making the most of Healthy Start and Best Start Foods, see <https://www.firststepsnutrition.org/hsbsfoods3>



## Eating well in the first year: a simple guide for families

### 0-6 months

Babies just need breastmilk (or an appropriate first infant formula). If you are concerned your baby may be hungry or starts to wake more often, talk to your health visitor or a breastfeeding counsellor who can give you support on how to maximise your breastmilk or look at the milk feeds you give. Changes in a baby's sleeping patterns before 6 months of age do not mean they are hungry or need solids, and are a normal part of development. Evidence shows that a baby's waking and sleeping patterns are not related to whether they have breastmilk or infant formula, but to their own unique development pattern. It is normal for breastfeeding to continue at night during the first year of life.

### Around 6 months

Babies are likely to show the signs of readiness for the introduction of solids alongside breastmilk (or first infant formula) at about 6 months. Babies should be able to sit up and hold their head steady, pick up food and move it to their mouth, and swallow food. Every baby is different, and some may be slower than others to learn to handle food in the mouth, but a range of smooth foods and soft finger foods can be offered.

### 6-7 months

This period is all about introducing tastes and textures, learning to have confidence in your baby and the food they can manage, and gradually increasing the amount of solids you offer alongside breastmilk or first infant formula. You can include baby in mealtimes with others as soon as you start to introduce solids, and babies will learn from watching others eat and mimic their behaviour. You can introduce a small cup with water in at mealtimes. Encourage your baby to get involved in eating from the start. It can be a messy time, so be prepared!

### 7-9 months

Baby will be able to eat three meals a day alongside breastmilk or first infant formula. Meals can be mashed or with soft lumps and babies will enjoy having finger foods with meals, holding a spoon even though they cannot yet feed themselves, and being included at mealtimes with other people.

### 10-12 months

Baby will be enjoying meals which are chopped with bigger soft lumps, can manage a wider range of finger foods, and will become increasingly dextrous in their ability to pick up small pieces of food and move them to their mouth. They will use a cup with more confidence.

### 12+ months

By 1 year of age, breastmilk or infant formula will provide less energy and nutrients than the food your baby eats, and babies will move on to three meals and two nutritious snacks a day in the second year. Breastmilk still provides energy, nutrients and protection from infection to babies for as long as they are breastfed. Babies should be eating a wide range of foods at meals, show increasing independence in eating, and use a cup for any drinks other than breastmilk.

# The first 6 months of life

## Breastmilk

Breastmilk meets all the nutritional needs for infants in the first 6 months of life and protects both mum's and baby's health.

Breastmilk is uniquely suited to a human baby. Its nutritional composition and the many special 'bioactive' factors it contains have allowed human populations to survive and develop for many generations.

It is impossible to make a substitute for breastmilk as its composition is dynamic – that means it is a living substance that changes in composition during feeds and as babies grow and develop. It is unique to each mum for her baby and for the environment in which they live. There are many hundreds of bioactive molecules in human milk that cannot be reproduced. Most of these protect babies from infections and help them develop a strong immune system for the future.

Breastmilk contains all the fluid, energy and nutrients a baby needs, as well as many important factors that are unique to human milk. These include:

- immunoglobulins and anti-infective agents that protect the infant from infections
- lactoferrin – a protein that helps babies absorb nutrients and has strong anti-bacterial properties
- special fatty acids which promote growth and development, and
- anti-viral factors, anti-bacterial substances and living white blood cells to offer protection against disease.

## • Breastfeeding is... • good for baby

Breastmilk is the natural food for a baby and provides the baby with complete nutrition. The composition of breastmilk alters to meet the changing needs of babies, whether that be during the day or over a period of time. Breastmilk has the unique capacity to respond to an infant's immediate environment, providing active immunity from micro-organisms and pathogens, and this is enhanced by mothers and babies keeping in close contact with one another during breastfeeds. Women report that breastfeeding can help build a strong bond between a mother and her baby, and many take immense satisfaction from seeing their baby grow and develop, knowing that they have been personally responsible.

Breastfeeding has many advantages for babies:

- Breastfeeding provides antibodies and contributes to healthy growth, protecting babies and children during their critical early development.
- Breastfed babies are less likely to get gastrointestinal infections leading to diarrhoea and potentially to dehydration. Gastrointestinal infections are one of the most common reasons a baby may visit hospital in the first year of life.
- Other infections – such as respiratory infections, ear infections and urinary tract infections – are all less common in breastfed babies.
- Breastfeeding contributes to early childhood development, leading to higher IQs. It also reduces the risk of childhood obesity, type 1 diabetes, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and leukaemia.



## Good for mum

Breastfeeding also benefits a mother's health.

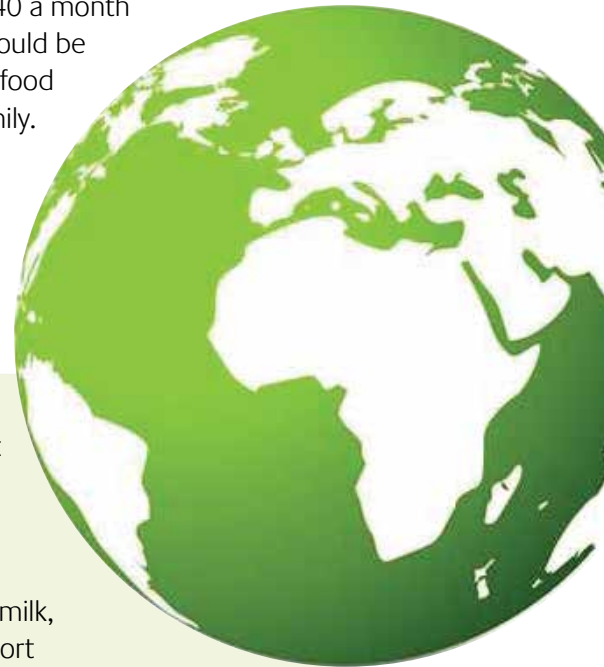
- Breastfeeding mothers have a lower risk of:
  - breast cancer
  - ovarian cancer and
  - type 2 diabetes.
- Mothers who breastfeed have better bone mineral density in later life.
- Mums are also more likely to get back to their pre-pregnancy weight if they exclusively breastfeed for 3-4 months and more.



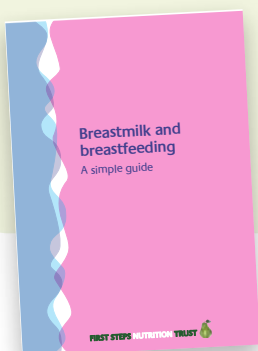
## Good for everyone

There are also financial benefits to the family, as well as benefits to the environment, when a woman chooses to breastfeed.

- The dairy industry which supplies the cows' milk protein and lactose used in most infant formula is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change, worldwide.
- Making infant formula in factories requires a considerable use of natural resources and energy. Energy is also needed to transport the infant formula to retail outlets.
- Breastmilk needs no packaging.
- Breastfeeding requires no bottles or teats.
- No heat energy is needed to make up breastmilk or wash feeding equipment.
- Breastmilk leaves no waste.
- Infant formula in a baby's first year is likely to cost at least £40 a month
  - money which could be spent on healthy food for the whole family.



Women should be encouraged to continue breastfeeding throughout the first year of their baby's life, and for as long after that as they choose to. Continued breastfeeding has health advantages for both mums and babies.



To find out more about breastfeeding and breastmilk, and for details of helplines and resources to support breastfeeding mothers – including our resource *Breastmilk and breastfeeding: A simple guide* – see [www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-infants-new-mums](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-infants-new-mums)

## Vitamins for breastfeeding mothers

All breastfeeding women should take a vitamin D supplement every day throughout the period during which they are breastfeeding. Healthy Start vitamins, which include 10 micrograms of vitamin D, are suitable for most women including vegetarians and are halal, but are not suitable for vegan women.

The Vegan Society produces a supplement called VEG 1 – which contains riboflavin, vitamin B6, folic acid (200 micrograms), vitamin B12, vitamin D (20 micrograms), iodine and selenium – and which is suitable for breastfeeding women. (See page 126 for contact details for the Vegan Society.)



Guidance on how all new mothers can eat well can be found in our resource *Eating well for new mums*, available at [www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources)

## Storing expressed breastmilk safely

Mothers who wish to provide expressed breastmilk for their babies and children in early years or other settings should be encouraged to do so. It is important that milk is stored safely and clearly labelled. Up-to-date information on how to store breastmilk safely can be found at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/expressing-storing-breast-milk/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/expressing-storing-breast-milk/)

Breastmilk must always be stored in a sterilised container. It can be stored:

- for up to five days in the back of the fridge at 4°C or lower
- for up to two weeks in the ice compartment of a fridge, or
- for up to six months in a freezer if it is -18°C or lower.

If the milk has been frozen, defrost it in the fridge first. Once it's defrosted, use it straight away. Do not re-freeze milk once it has been thawed.

Expressed breastmilk provided for babies in childcare should be clearly labelled with the child's name and the date, stored in a refrigerator and be used only for that child. Any expressed milk left over at the end of the day should be returned to the parent or guardian.

Parents can be recommended to seek further advice on expressing and storing breastmilk from a health visitor or breastfeeding counsellor.

## Supporting women to breastfeed

Childcare settings and carers should support breastfeeding mothers and encourage them to continue providing breastmilk. Guidance from the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative (see page 5) suggests that staff in children's centres and all those working towards Baby Friendly status in the community should ensure that parents' experiences in early years settings include:

- support to pregnant women to recognise the importance of early relationships to the health and wellbeing of their baby
- protection and support of breastfeeding in all areas of the service, and
- being supported to have a close and loving relationship with their baby.

Information about infant feeding for families can be found in the Unicef Baby Friendly and Start4Life leaflet *Off to the best start*, which can

be accessed at [www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2010/11/otbs\\_leaflet.pdf](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2010/11/otbs_leaflet.pdf)



## Vitamin supplements for breastfed infants

It is recommended that breastfed infants should receive a supplement of 8.5-10 micrograms of vitamin D a day from birth. However, advice on suitable supplements, how to give them, and to whom, may vary locally, so seek advice from the infant feeding or health visitor lead. Families eligible for Healthy Start get free vitamins, and in some areas vitamins are free to all infants and/or mums in the year after birth. Healthy Start children's vitamins are suitable, and can be purchased from pharmacies or may be available from children's centres in some areas.

For information on how vegan families can support infants and children in the early years, see the resource *Eating well: vegan infants and under-5s*.

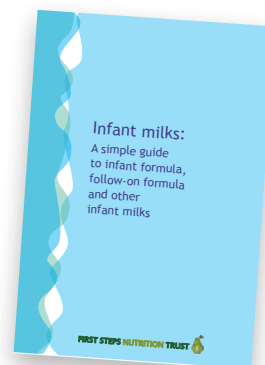


## Infant formula and other milks

For up-to-date information for parents and carers on infant milks, see our resource *Infant milks: A simple guide to infant formula, follow-on formula and other infant milks*, available at [www.firststepsnutrition.org/parents-carers](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/parents-carers)

This includes lots of frequently asked questions about different infant milks and whether they are useful.

More detailed information for health professionals about infant milks marketed in the UK can be found at the website [www.infantmilkinfo.org](http://www.infantmilkinfo.org)



### A simple guide to choosing milks for infants

✓ = Safe to give. ✗ = Do not give this milk.

	Infants 0-6 months	Infants 6 months – 1 year
Breastmilk	✓	✓
Full-fat cows' milk (or goats' milk, sheep's milk or unsweetened fortified soya milk, oat milk or coconut milk) as main milk drink	✗	✗
Infant formula suitable from birth (first milk) (cows' or goats' milk based)	✓	✓
Infant formula marketed for hungrier babies, (cows' milk based)	Not recommended	Not recommended
Specialist formula available over the counter: anti-reflux, lactose-free, partially hydrolysed, and comfort milks	Only use under medical supervision	Only use under medical supervision
Soya protein based infant formula	Only use under medical supervision	Only use under medical supervision
Follow-on formula (cows' or goats' milk based)	✗	Not recommended
Growing-up milks and toddler milks (cows' milk, goats' milk or soya milk based)	✗	✗
Plant-based milk alternatives made from soya, oats, nuts, peas or other vegetable products as the main milk drink	✗	✗
Rice milk or rice drink – <b>Do not give</b> to any children under 5 years of age.	✗	✗

## Making up infant milks safely

It is essential to follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully when making up infant formula, as milks that are too concentrated can provide too much energy (calories) and too little fluid, and milks that are too dilute may not provide enough energy (calories) and nutrients. If milks are made up to be more concentrated than they should be, this can lead to overweight or potentially dangerous dehydration.

**Powdered infant milks are not sterile.** There are clear guidelines for parents and carers on how to make up infant formula safely, using water at a temperature of at least 70°C to kill any bacteria present in the powdered milk in *Bottle feeding advice* at [www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/bottle-feeding-advice/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/bottle-feeding-advice/). Or you can download a copy of the booklet *Guide to bottle feeding* from [www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/bottle-feeding-resources/guide-to-bottle-feeding/](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/bottle-feeding-resources/guide-to-bottle-feeding/)



## Vitamins for mixed-fed or formula-fed babies

Babies who are mixed-fed (having some breastmilk and some infant formula) or formula-fed, and who have less than 500ml of formula a day should have vitamin drops. Healthy Start vitamins containing vitamins A, C and D are those recommended. These are available in pharmacies at a very reasonable cost, or free of charge through the Healthy Start scheme for eligible families. In some areas they are free to all.



# Eating well for infants from 6 months

## Introducing foods to complement breastmilk or infant formula from 6 months

Complementary feeding is the term given to the introduction of foods other than breastmilk (or infant formula) to an infant. We also call it 'introducing solids'. In the UK it is recommended that the addition of foods other than milk start at about 6 months of age. In the first six months of life, infants can get all the fluid and nutrients they need from breastmilk (or from correctly made up infant formula), and there is no need to introduce other foods before an infant's gut and swallow reflexes are fully ready. If parents or carers think an infant needs complementary foods before 6 months (26 weeks) of age, they should talk to a health visitor or other qualified health professional.

## What is the aim of introducing foods other than milk?

We know that early experience with a variety of flavours leads to more ready acceptance of new foods later in life. We know that the transition from a single foodstuff to a wide variety of foods in the first year requires a baby to associate food flavours with the experience of meals and eating, and that babies will often reject a new flavour but then learn to accept it after repeated exposures.

The eating patterns and food choices within a family will shape children's preferences and food acceptance patterns. Overweight tracks in families from parents to children, and it is thought that this may be partly due to early patterns of exposure to foods and eating patterns. The social context of how children eat as an infant is also important, because the eating behaviour of people around them serves as a model for a developing child, and we know role models can have powerful effects on food selection.



## Infant development and readiness for foods other than milk

Every baby is different, but there are three clear signs which, together, show that a baby is ready for some solid foods alongside breastmilk or infant formula. It is very rare for these signs to appear together before 6 months of age.

- Baby can stay in a sitting position and hold their head steady.
- Baby can co-ordinate their eyes, hand and mouth so that they can look at the food, pick it up and put it in their mouth all by themselves.
- Baby can swallow food. Babies who are not ready will push food back out of their mouth. However, if a baby is given a smooth, purée-type food, it is difficult to spit this out once in the mouth, so people may mistake involuntary swallowing of these foods with the ability to swallow food by choice.

### Signs that might be mistaken for a baby needing solid foods

People may mistake other signs that a baby needs solid foods. Research suggests that families often mistake the following as signs of readiness for solids:

- baby waking in the night when they have previously slept through
- the need for extra milk feeds; or
- signs such as chewing on their fist.

However, these are just normal infant behaviours as babies grow and develop.

Families often perceive baby boys to be 'hungrier' earlier than girls and may mistake a baby that is bigger than its peers as needing food at a younger age.

Starting solid foods won't make a baby any more likely to sleep through the night, and extra feeds of milk are usually enough until the baby is developmentally ready for other foods.

### Golden rules

The golden rules for introducing foods to babies, and for eating in the first year of life, are:

- **Offer simple and unprocessed foods** – Base meals around minimally processed and natural foods. Make sure children can see and touch the foods they are offered, and can connect food tastes to how things look and feel, so they can learn to choose foods for themselves.
- **Let baby get involved in the eating experience** – Take your time, and involve babies in meals as soon as they are ready for solids. Make eating a happy event. It is learning and play as well as a chance to provide energy and nutrients. Include baby in mealtimes with others whenever you can.
- **Avoid ultra-processed foods** – If there are more than a handful of ingredients on the label, put it back on the shelf.

## Frequently asked questions about introducing solid foods

### **My mum says I was given food when I was 3 months old and was fine. When did the advice change to not offering food until about 6 months of age?**

For a number of years parents and carers were advised to introduce foods at about 4 months of age, and it was quite common for people to introduce foods even earlier, as people thought this would help babies sleep better or grow faster. Recommendations to offer food from about 6 months of age have been in place for over ten years in the UK as we now know that this will give a baby the best chance of good health throughout their life. It can be confusing, as manufacturers still market some foods as being suitable from 4 months. However, the World Health Organization and the Departments of Health in the UK are clear that everyone should recommend introducing food from about 6 months.

### **My baby was born prematurely. How do I know when he will be ready for solids?**

Readiness for solids should be the key sign of when any baby is ready for solid foods. Babies should be able to sit up and hold their head steady, pick up food and move it to their mouth, and swallow food. If a baby is born weeks or months before their due date, they may not show the signs of readiness as soon as babies who are born full-term. Your health visitor will support you to make sure solids are not introduced too early, or too late. Premature babies may take longer to get used to foods, and meals may be longer and more messy to start with as their feeding skills may be slightly less well developed.

### **Why has the advice on the best age to offer babies solid food changed?**

The recommendation to offer food at around 6 months of age is based on research about how a baby grows and develops, as well as what we know about the best thing for digestive health and babies' kidneys. Introducing food too early has no advantages and may increase the risk of infection and illness.

### **My baby is on the 95th percentile for weight and height, so will he need to start on solids earlier?**

It doesn't matter how big your baby is, the development of his digestive system and kidneys will be at the same rate as for smaller babies. Wait for the signs of readiness for solid foods at about 6 months of age.

### **My 5 month old baby has started waking at night. Does this mean she needs solids now?**

Babies have several growth spurts in the first few months and waking in the night may mean that they need more energy and nutrients at this time, but they can get those from breastmilk or infant formula feeds. Talk to your health visitor about maximising your breastmilk if you are breastfeeding. Growth spurts don't usually last very long and babies can soon settle down again. Research has shown that introducing solids has no impact on how long a baby sleeps for. That is down to each unique baby and his or her development and personality.

### **I have heard that, if I give foods earlier, my baby will have fewer allergies and be a less fussy eater. Is this true?**

Breastfeeding protects babies from developing allergies. All the current evidence we have has led to recommendations that babies should be exclusively breastfed (or given a first infant milk) for about six months, and then solids should be introduced in line with baby's signs of readiness for solid foods. There is no evidence that early introduction of foods before 6 months of age is beneficial in preventing the development of allergies.

### **What is 'baby-led feeding'?**

Most infants are introduced to complementary foods both by being offered small tastes of new foods on a spoon, and by being encouraged to hold foods that they can taste themselves. In 'baby-led feeding', food is not given to the baby on a spoon at all. Instead, babies are encouraged to explore for themselves all the food on offer to them and to eat whatever they can get into their mouths independently. It is suggested that: babies who are spoon-fed may be given more to eat than they would choose; that spoon-feeding purées delays the experience of chewing; that babies fed food they dislike on a spoon may become fussy eaters; and that allowing full independence in eating encourages the development of a range of motor skills.

Encouraging babies to be involved in mealtimes, to eat similar foods to those enjoyed by others at the table, to hold finger foods and spoons and to try to feed themselves are all recommended practices. Offering babies tastes of first foods on a spoon is, however, a good way for many babies to experience a wide range of tastes. Babies may spit food out when they first try it as the taste and texture may be unfamiliar, but trying a whole range of tastes and textures during the second six months of life is important if we want children to eat a range of different foods as toddlers. Few people would disagree with many of the principles of baby-led feeding, but if babies are less independent in their eating, offering foods on a spoon at mealtimes as well can be encouraged during the first year of life to ensure that they eat well and get all the nutrients they need. The risk of choking when babies feed themselves is no different to the risk when they are fed by spoon.


 What to eat

## Introducing first foods: a simple guide

### Suitable foods

- First foods for babies over 6 months of age can include a wide range of unprocessed foods: vegetables, potatoes, cereal foods (such as rice, oats, polenta, semolina, pearl barley), pulses (peas, beans and lentils), meat, fish, eggs, tofu, ground nuts and seeds, and fruits. See pages 24-39 for examples of suitable first foods to give.
- Salt, sugar or artificial sweeteners should never be added to foods for infants.
- Naturally sweet fruits (such as apples or bananas) or vegetables (such as carrots, sweet potatoes or butternut squash) should be used to sweeten foods rather than adding sugar.
- If using commercial foods, the manufacturer's instructions should be followed carefully. However, these foods are usually expensive, sweet and bland in taste, too smooth, and less nutritious compared to foods that parents or carers easily make themselves.

### Suitable drinks

- The only drinks that are recommended for infants in the first year are breastmilk or an appropriate infant formula, and water (see page 12).
- Whole animal milk or calcium-fortified unsweetened milk alternatives (but not rice milk) can be used in cooking for children from 6 months, but should not be used as the main drink until after 1 year of age.

### Foods and drinks that are not suitable in the first year of life

#### Foods that are not suitable

- Ready meals or take-away foods
- Processed meat or fish dishes (for example, ones covered in breadcrumbs or batter, canned meats, smoked or cured meat and fish) that may be high in salt
- Savoury or salty snacks
- Very high-fibre foods (such as high-bran-type cereals)
- Any foods with special ingredients, designed for adults – for example, low-fat or low-sugar products, or fortified products
- Artificially sweetened foods
- Foods with the additives E102, E104, E110, E122, E124, E211 or E219
- Honey
- In addition, avoid whole nuts or chunks of food such as apple that might be a choking risk. (For more on food safety, see page 46.)

#### Drinks that are not suitable

- Soft drinks, squashes, fruit juices or cordials, either with or without added sugar
- Drinks with added caffeine or stimulants
- Artificially sweetened drinks
- Drinks with the additives E102, E104, E110, E122, E124, E211 or E219
- Rice milk or rice drinks
- Any types of tea or coffee
- Alcohol





## How to eat

### How much food to offer

The aim of first foods is to get infants used to new tastes and textures. Every baby will be different, and some will enjoy food from the beginning, some may help themselves to food straight away and be independent eaters quite quickly, and some may manage several spoons of newly introduced foods, while others will take longer to get used to new tastes.

Milk will provide the majority of energy (calories) and nutrients when complementary foods are first introduced. The amount of food can be gradually increased over the first few weeks until babies are managing to eat in a pattern similar to that shown for infants aged 7-9 months on page 50. Babies will automatically drink less milk as their food intake increases.

### Texture and flavours

Some babies will be ready and eager to hold food, feed themselves and enjoy a variety of foods of different textures from 6 months of age. Some babies may need more encouragement to start on solid food, and offering smooth or mashed food on a spoon may be useful to get them accustomed to new textures and tastes. It can be useful to start new tastes with savoury vegetable flavours, as evidence suggests that babies introduced to single vegetable flavours over the first few days of complementary feeding are more accepting of vegetables in meals later on.

Pouches of ready-made puréed food should be avoided, as these often mix up flavours and offer predominantly sweet tastes. They are often lower in nutrients than home-prepared foods and have a very smooth texture that most babies don't need if they start eating at 6 months. If using these foods, the baby should never be allowed to feed directly from the pouch.

Foods (such as cereal or rusks) should never

be added to a baby's bottle as this can cause choking and confuse a baby's appetite.

### Mealtimes

- At 6 months, babies should be able to sit up with some support and they should be in a sitting position when they are offered food.
- If parents or carers are offering a baby food on a spoon, they should sit opposite or close by and make eye contact with the baby as they offer the food. This means they can follow the baby's cues on when the baby is ready for the next spoonful.
- Distractions at mealtimes, such as sitting a baby in front of a TV, phone or tablet, should be avoided. Mealtimes are an ideal opportunity for interacting with baby and making conversation.
- Small amounts of food can be given before milk feeds at mealtimes, and individual tastes can be given to start with, focusing on savoury foods.
- Parents and carers need not be surprised if the baby initially spits the food out or appears to dislike it. New tastes take a little getting used to and they may have to offer a food between five and ten times before it becomes a favourite.
- Babies should never be forced to eat. They should be allowed to go at their own pace, to handle food, and to start to feed themselves as soon as they wish.

### Safety at mealtimes

- Parents or carers should always stay with babies during meals and keep an eye on what they are eating to make sure they don't choke.
- If using a highchair, it is important to make sure the baby is safely strapped in.

## How to give drinks

From 6 months of age, infants should be introduced to drinking from a cup or beaker, and from the age of 12 months they should be discouraged from drinking from a bottle. It is best to use cups that are open-topped or which have a spout that is free-running, so that there is no need to 'suck'. Sucking drinks from a bottle teat or spout means the drink spends more time in contact with the teeth and this can lead to dental problems. Baby cups can be useful for introducing drinking from a cup as they can be held easily and offer a small volume of liquid.

Water given to children under 6 months should be boiled and cooled first, but tap water is fine for all infants over 6 months of age.

There is no need for drinks other than milk or water in the first year. Baby juices or baby herbal drinks are not necessary and they contain sugar so can damage baby teeth. For more on drinks, see page 18.



## Baby teeth matter

It is important to protect a baby's teeth as soon as they start to have solid foods.

Advise families:

- Not to offer foods or drinks high in sugar.
- Not to offer anything but milk or water in a bottle. Introduce a cup from 6 months.
- Not to dip dummies in anything sweet, or pacify children with sweet foods.
- To brush baby's teeth twice a day every day as soon as they appear, using a small smear of fluoridated toothpaste.

Parents who have any questions about whether their baby may benefit from fluoride drops, can ask their dentist for advice, as the water may or may not be fluoridated in different areas.

## Which milks are suitable from 6 months to 1 year of age?

The main milk drink throughout the first year of life should remain breastmilk or a first infant formula. It is important to dispel the myth that breastmilk is not important in the second six months of life. Both mum and baby will benefit from breastfeeding for as long as they both wish to do so.

Full-fat animal milk or an unsweetened, calcium-fortified milk alternative can be used in cooking for infants from 6 months of age, but are not suitable as the main milk drink as they do not have the right balance of nutrients a baby needs in this important phase of growth and development.

**It is particularly important that rice milk is not given to children under the age of 5 years, as it has been shown to contain traces of arsenic and younger children may reach their acceptable daily intake of arsenic quickly as they drink relatively large amounts of milk for their body size.**

## Eating with others

Babies can be included in meals with others as soon as they start to eat solid foods. There is no need to make special foods for babies. The recipes in this book make good meals for people of all ages. The authors have made and tasted them all and can recommend them! More family recipes showing how meals can be adapted for mixed age groups, and suitable portion sizes for adults and children can be found in the *Eating well recipe book* available at

[www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources)



## Commercial baby foods

A range of products are marketed as baby foods suitable for infants in the first year of life. These may be soft, ready-prepared foods sold in jars and pouches, ready-to-mix packets of cereals and porridge powders, drinks, biscuits, snacks, yoghurts and fruit products. There is often confusion among parents and carers as to whether these products are necessary or beneficial for infants. Evidence suggests that many babyfood products are less nutrient-dense, are sweeter, and are of a different consistency to home-prepared equivalents. In the case of baby snacks and biscuits these are not needed in the diets of infants at all. Commercial baby foods are also very expensive and this is an important consideration when wastage may be high or where family budgets may be tight. We don't use any commercial baby foods in our examples of how infants can eat well. For more information on commercial baby foods see [www.firststepsnutrition.org/babyfood-composition](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/babyfood-composition)

## Introducing potentially allergenic foods at 6 months

Once infants reach 6 months of age, the following foods can be introduced carefully one at a time:

- cows' milk
- wheat
- nuts, ground nuts, or nut butters
- seeds, crushed seeds, or seed butters
- eggs
- fish and shellfish.

Initially give them to a baby in very small amounts and watch for any symptoms of an allergic reaction. This can be one or more of the following:

- diarrhoea or vomiting
- a cough
- wheezing or shortness of breath
- itchy skin or throat
- a rash
- swollen lips and throat
- runny or blocked nose, or
- sore, red and itchy eyes.

# Introducing foods to infants at about 6 months

## Foods to introduce to infants from 6 months

At about 6 months of age, babies will be ready for solid foods alongside the breastmilk or infant formula that still provides most of their energy and nutrients. Some babies will happily eat finger foods and mashed foods, and may progress swiftly to a range of tastes and textures. Other babies may progress more slowly and start off on smooth foods given on a spoon alongside foods they can hold themselves, with the aim of moving on to mashed foods and other textures as they become more confident eaters.



**Smooth foods** can be prepared by cooking foods well, pushing them through a sieve, or blending them with a little breastmilk or infant formula – or with full-fat cows' milk if baby is over 6 months old. Some foods can be easily mashed to a smooth consistency. Smooth foods should have no big lumps, pips, seeds or skin.

**Mashed foods** are simply raw or cooked foods mashed to a smooth but slightly lumpy consistency. This can usually be achieved easily by mashing the food with a fork, using some breastmilk or infant formula – or some full-fat cows' milk if baby is over 6 months old – to aid the mash where needed.





**Finger foods** are pieces of food that babies can hold and use to feed themselves. Babies will often show their readiness to start having complementary food by showing an interest in holding foods and putting foods to their mouth, and it is important to encourage independence in eating. Babies are able to pick things up with their whole hand after 6 months and the best finger foods to offer are ones that are soft and easy to bite and chew. It can be useful to make the finger foods slightly bigger than a baby's hand, so that they can grip things in their fist. The size of an adult finger is a good guide.



Babies should not be left alone at any time when they are eating, and carers should pay particular attention when babies are eating finger foods to make sure that babies don't choke on any pieces that break off in their mouth as they develop their eating skills.

#### **FINGER FOODS: TIPS FOR CARERS**

- Make sure finger foods don't contain any pips, stones, tough skin or stringy bits.
- To start with, offer soft or cooked vegetables and fruit.
- Avoid whole grapes, chunks of apple or carrot, nuts and popcorn, as these are the foods babies are most likely to choke on. Also avoid small, hard foods and those that are in gelatinous pieces. Always stay with babies when they are eating.
- If you are offering raw food, make sure it is washed thoroughly.



## Vegetables

Vegetables are good first tastes to introduce to infants. Try vegetables one at a time to start with, to introduce new flavours, and then try combinations. To thicken smooth or mashed vegetables, add potatoes or sweet potatoes. A wide variety of vegetable foods should be offered, and foods from across the rainbow of vegetable colours should be introduced into babies' diets. Brightly coloured foods will be attractive to infants, but there is no need to use expensive vegetables. Using vegetables in season and from local sources will be most cost-effective.

Salt or sugar should never be added to foods served to babies.

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

AVOCADO



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

BROCCOLI



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

BUTTERNUT  
SQUASH

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



CARROT

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



CAULI-FLOWER

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



COURGETTE

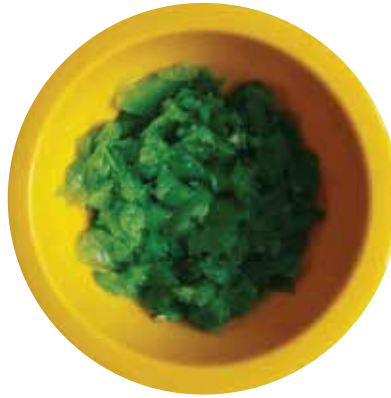


Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

GREEN BEANS



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

MUSHROOM



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

PARSNIP



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

PEAS



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



RED PEPPER

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



RUNNER BEANS

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



SWEDE



## Starchy foods

A range of starchy foods can be offered as first foods. These can be: starchy root vegetables such as potato, sweet potato, yam or manioc; rice; porridge made from oats; cereals such as pearl barley, semolina (ground wheat), or polenta (corn meal); or other cereals such as quinoa or millet. Rice, porridge and other cereals can be mashed, rather than using expensive infant versions, and ground rice and semolina are smooth cereals when made up. Cereals can be mixed with breastmilk or infant formula – or with full-fat cows' milk if baby is over 6 months old.

Salt or sugar should never be added to food served to babies.





Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



POTATO

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



SWEET  
POTATO

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food



MANIOC

SEMOLINA

POLENTA – Smooth

POLENTA – Finger food



## Protein foods

These protein foods are also rich in other important nutrients.

Infants can be offered a good variety of protein foods such as meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils and tofu.

Many of these foods are rich in iron and zinc, which are important nutrients for babies.

Eggs are an excellent first food as they are easy to prepare and easy to mash if that is needed. Tofu can be mixed with other foods as it mashes easily and has a smooth texture. Fish and meat can be introduced as first foods. They should be well cooked, and checked to make sure there are no bones or pieces of gristle. They should then be chopped finely and mixed with some breastmilk or infant formula – or with full-fat cows' milk if baby is over 6 months old. Foods can be made smooth by putting them through a mouli or mixer. Pieces of well cooked meat and fish can also be offered as finger foods.

Salt or sugar should never be added to food served to babies.

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

EGG



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

CHICKEN



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

LAMB





Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



PORK

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



SALMON

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



WHITE FISH

**BUTTER BEANS**

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



**RED LENTILS**

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



**YELLOW LENTILS**

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



**TOFU**

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



## Dairy and dairy alternatives

Dairy foods, and calcium-fortified dairy alternatives, are good first foods to introduce to babies at about 6 months of age as they are naturally smooth, can be mixed with other tastes and textures, and don't require any preparation. Unsweetened full-fat milk yoghurt or milk alternative products should be chosen, and 'baby' yoghurts or fromage frais that have been sweetened should be avoided. For more information on vegan alternatives to dairy foods see the resource *Eating well: vegan infants and under 5s* at [www.firststepsnutrition.org](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org).

Plain full-fat milk yoghurt



Greek yoghurt



Cottage cheese



---

Plain soya yoghurt



Plain coconut yoghurt





## Fruits

Once infants have accepted other savoury tastes, fruit can be introduced. Fruit will be accepted more readily than vegetables by most babies as it has a sweet taste. Fruits should be cooked to soften them, or soft fruits can be mashed. If making a smooth version, the fruit should be free of pips and skin. Any type of fruit can be used – canned in juice, frozen or fresh. If using canned fruit, it is important to avoid fruit canned in syrup. If fruits are naturally sour, a sweeter fruit such as apple or banana can be added to make it more palatable.

If serving fruit as finger foods, the pieces should be soft and manageable, and chunks of apple or harder fruits should be avoided.

Never add sugar or salt to foods served to babies.

Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

APPLE



Smooth/mashed

Finger food

BANANA



Smooth

Mashed

Finger food

CANNED PEACH





Smooth/mashed



Finger food



KIWI

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



MANGO

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



MELON

PEAR

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



PINEAPPLE

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



PLUM

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



RASPBERRIES

Smooth



Mashed



Finger food



STRAW-  
BERRIES

Smooth/mashed



Finger food



WATER-  
MELON



## Finger foods for older babies

As babies learn to handle foods in their mouth, become more dextrous and learn to bite and chew, a range of finger foods can be offered. Some examples of finger foods for more confident eaters are shown here. Some babies will become confident eaters very quickly, while others might be developmentally slower, so it's important to follow each baby's cues. Remind carers always to stay with babies and young children when they are eating and watch that they don't get into difficulty with any pieces of food they bite off.



Breadsticks



Toast



Macaroni



Carrots



Rice cakes



Cucumber



Green pepper



Sweetcorn



Okra



Tomatoes



Red pepper



Black grapes

# General tips for eating well in the first year of life

Families can sometimes be anxious about introducing solid foods to babies. For example, they may worry about whether their baby can manage to swallow the food safely, whether they might have a reaction to a new food, whether they might like the food offered, or whether they will know how much food to offer.

Anxiety around introducing solids can mean that some families rely on soft foods for a longer period than needed, may offer a restricted range of foods, or may be unsure how to try new foods when a baby has initially shown disinterest.

Some of the questions and answers below may help families as they introduce solid food.

## **I have tried to offer my baby tastes of food on a spoon, but he just turns his head away.**

If your baby is under 6 months of age, they might not be ready for solid foods yet. If they are about 6 months old and show the signs of readiness for solids (being able to sit up and hold their head steady, picking up food and moving it to their mouth, and swallowing food), keep offering tastes of foods at mealtimes on a spoon when they are alert and happy, but always wait for them to open their mouth. Give them finger food to hold as well, to get them interested in the tastes and smells of food. It takes a while for some babies to realise that food, as well as milk, can satisfy their hunger. Don't force a baby to eat. They will get the hang of it if you keep gently trying.

## **I have followed the advice on offering mashed vegetables as the first tastes but I am sure my baby just doesn't like things like broccoli as she makes a face and spits it out!**

A baby will often grimace when trying a new food as it is unfamiliar, but that doesn't mean that they don't like it. Research suggests that it can take up to ten times of offering a food for a baby to accept it readily, but that if you do persevere with a range of flavours, starting with savoury tastes, this will make them a much better eater in the long run.



### I am worried about my baby choking if the food is not very smooth.

Babies take different amounts of time to get used to lumps in food, but this is an important skill they need to learn. Try to offer a range of increasingly lumpy textures when they are 6 to 7 months old, and always stay with your baby so you can be sure they are not getting into difficulty. You may be surprised how well they manage to handle the food in their mouth and swallow it safely. There is no evidence babies choke more when feeding themselves, so let them get involved. For more information on avoiding choking, see page 46.

### I get very anxious around feeding my baby at mealtimes, and am just not sure I'm doing it right.

If you feel anxious, talk to your health visitor or staff at your local children's centre, and they will give you tips for managing mealtimes and managing your own feelings. We know that when mums are stressed this can impact on how they feed their baby. So, if you feel you are not coping, that your baby is more difficult or fussy at mealtimes than other babies, or that you are not good at reading your baby's 'cues' around when they are hungry, ask for help.

### Resources for helping and supporting families

The Institute of Health Visiting provides resources both for health professionals and for families, to support them around a range of parenting issues including eating well and dealing with emotional issues. See [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)

In some areas, training in the HENRY programme will provide staff with skills to help parents to gain the confidence, knowledge and tools, as well the parenting skills, they need to adopt a healthy family lifestyle and support their infants and toddlers to eat well. See [www.henry.org.uk](http://www.henry.org.uk)

The Solihull Approach Training Programme can also empower health professionals in their work with families around emotional issues. See [www.solihullapproachparenting.com](http://www.solihullapproachparenting.com)



## Food allergies

Food variety is important in a baby's diet but there is also a small chance that a baby may have one or more food allergies. It is estimated that about 1 in 20 children aged 1-5 years have food hypersensitivity, but this is higher in younger children. It is much more likely that a baby will have a food or other allergy if they come from an 'atopic' family (a family where one or both parents have eczema, hayfever or asthma, or have food allergies themselves). Most children will grow out of food allergies, however, and parents or carers should seek advice if their baby has a suspected allergy.

If babies are from atopic families, breastfeeding offers the greatest protection against allergy development.

There is no evidence to suggest that avoiding ingredients that either contain, or are themselves allergens during pregnancy, or giving these ingredients to infants before 6 months of age, or much later, will help prevent them developing a food allergy.

## Cows' milk allergy

A small proportion of infants (estimated at between 2 and 5 in 100 babies) will be allergic to cows' milk. There is a risk of over-diagnosis of cows' milk allergy as some of the symptoms are common in infancy, and so care is needed that a diagnosis is made carefully based on multiple, persistent, severe or treatment-resistant symptoms.

Babies who are exclusively breastfed are much less likely to develop cows' milk allergy (estimated to be about 1 in 200 babies). If a breastfed baby is diagnosed with cows' milk allergy then continued breastfeeding is recommended, with mum excluding cows' milk products from her diet and taking a calcium and vitamin D supplement.

Babies who are mixed-fed or formula-fed will need an extensively hydrolysed infant milk, and in rare cases where there are multiple food allergies or very severe allergy, an amino-acid based formula may be needed. For more information see <https://gpifn.org.uk/cma/>. For information on specialised infant milks see *Specialised infant milks in the UK: 0-6 months. Information for health professionals* at <https://infantmilkinfo.org/type-of-infant-milk/>

### If a parent thinks their child is having an allergic reaction

If a parent thinks their child shows any symptoms that may be related to food allergy, suggest that they talk to their GP for advice, or call NHS Direct on 111 for non-urgent medical enquiries. In rare cases there can be a severe anaphylactic reaction that can be life-threatening. If a parent or carer thinks a baby is suffering a severe allergic reaction, they should call 999 and ask for a paramedic. For more information, see [www.nhs.uk/babyfoodallergy](http://www.nhs.uk/babyfoodallergy)

## Food for all

The UK is a multicultural and multi-faith society and some people's food choices for themselves, and their families, may lead to some foods and ingredients being avoided. Each individual will make their own choices regardless of common ideas about food restrictions and so it is important not to make assumptions about what people will, and won't eat. It is useful to remember that food suitable for vegetarians and vegans is suitable for most population groups. A guide to some of the food-related customs that may be commonly observed by different religious and cultural groups is shown below.

### Food choices of different religious and cultural groups

	Jewish	Hindu*	Sikh*	Muslim	Buddhist	Rastafarian**
Eggs	No blood spots	Some	Yes	Yes	It varies	It varies
Milk/yoghurt	Not with meat	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	It varies
Cheese	Not with meat	It varies	It varies	Possibly	Yes	It varies
Chicken	Kosher	It varies	It varies	Halal	No	It varies
Mutton/lamb	Kosher	It varies	Yes	Halal	No	It varies
Beef and beef products	Kosher	No	No	Halal	No	It varies
Pork and pork products	No	Rarely	Rarely	No	No	No
Fish	With fins and scales	With fins and scales	It varies	It varies	Some	Yes
Shellfish	No	It varies	It varies	It varies	No	No
Butter/ghee	Kosher	It varies	It varies	It varies	No	It varies
Lard	No	No	No	No	No	No
Cereal foods	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nuts/pulses	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fruits/vegetables	Yes	Yes***	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fasting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\* Strict Hindus and Sikhs will not eat eggs, meat, fish, and some fats.

\*\* Some Rastafarians are vegan.

\*\*\* Jains have restrictions on some vegetable foods. Check with the individuals.

## Vegetarian diets

For families who choose to bring their infant up as a vegetarian, there are lots of ideas for vegetarian foods and meals in this resource. Vegetarians generally avoid meat and fish, but eat eggs and dairy products. It is perfectly possible for a vegetarian infant to obtain all the energy and nutrients they need, providing care is taken to:

- offer a good variety of foods
- offer a range of meat and fish alternatives such as eggs, pulses (peas, beans and lentils), ground nuts and seeds, cereal foods and soy products such as tofu, and
- follow any advice on vitamin supplements.

## Vegan diets

Vegans usually avoid all animal products including meat, fish, dairy products and eggs, and any ingredient with an animal source. If children are brought up on a vegan diet, care has to be taken that they are introduced to a wide range of foods in the first year, and families are advised to talk through their choices with a health professional.

If a baby is being brought up as a vegan, it is particularly beneficial to continue breastfeeding throughout the first year and beyond.



The guide *Eating well: vegan infants and under-5s* provides details of how to meet nutritional needs of vegan children, and information about nutrients that may need to be provided as supplements. See [www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources)

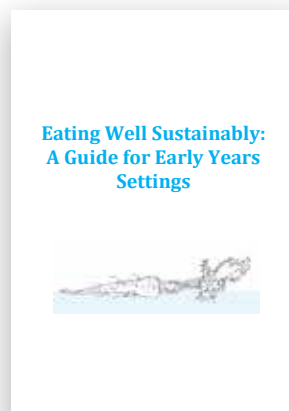
## Gluten-free diets

There is no need to restrict gluten (the protein found in some cereals such as wheat, rye and barley) in the diet of babies over 6 months of age, even if there is a history of gluten intolerance in the family. Gluten has to be present in the diet for a diagnosis of gluten intolerance to be made. Advice on symptoms and diagnosis can be found at [www.coeliac.org.uk](http://www.coeliac.org.uk). Gluten-free diets also restrict oats as some people with coeliac disease are also intolerant to oats. In this resource we have indicated which recipes are gluten-free because, although few babies will need to have gluten-free diets, other family members who may need to have a gluten-free diet may want to eat the same food.

## Think global – Act local

Parents and carers should be encouraged to consider the environmental impact of their food and drink choices when buying food, and where possible buy local food in season, and food from sustainable sources.

A guide to how those in early years settings can shop for, cook and manage food more sustainably – *Eating well sustainably: A guide for early years settings* – can be accessed at [www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-sustainably](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-sustainably)



For other information about sustainable food and educational resources related to food and the environment, see [www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

## Tips for parents and carers to encourage eating well

- Make sure babies sit in the same place to eat, as often as possible, to help them feel comfortable and secure.
- Offer food when babies are most likely to be hungry.
- Present simple foods that they can easily see and distinguish.
- Offer colourful fruits and vegetables that will catch their attention.
- Give small portions, offer praise when it's finished, and then offer more.
- Give foods they have eaten before alongside anything that is new.
- Eat together. This makes mealtimes more enjoyable and sociable. Eat a spoonful of your child's food and show your enjoyment by saying 'yummy' and giving lots of smiles.
- Encourage children to feed themselves. They may well eat more if they have more control.
- Try to keep calm. If parents are anxious and tense, babies will pick up on this.
- Try not to worry if more food is eaten on some days than on others. Be guided by your baby and their appetite as they are growing and developing in the first year.

## Fussy eating

If babies are introduced to new foods and flavours at about 6 months of age, are able to watch and mimic older children and adults eating the same foods, and are encouraged to be independent eaters, they are likely to accept a range of foods. If the introduction of foods is left until later in the first year, babies may be less keen to try new foods. So introducing foods at about 6 months of age is important. Most advice around fussy eating is aimed at toddlers who are more likely to go through a phase of food refusal, but some of the tips to encourage babies to eat well, above, may be useful if families are anxious about fussy eating in babies.

Breastfed babies are more likely to accept new food tastes because flavours from food that their mums eat will have passed into the breastmilk, preparing babies for a range of foods.

## Active babies

Being physically active every day is important for the healthy growth and development of babies. Babies should be encouraged to be active throughout the day, every day. Before a baby begins to crawl, they should be encouraged to be physically active by reaching and grasping, pulling and pushing, moving their head, body and limbs during daily routines, and during supervised floor play, including tummy time. Tummy time – when babies lie on their tummy or side while they're awake – is important for babies' healthy development. Babies can be put on the floor, on a safe firm surface, or on someone's lap or chest – whatever works best. This supports

development overall and will encourage muscle development in their neck, back and arms, which will help them learn to roll and crawl. Tummy time should always be supervised and families reassured that babies will develop at different rates, with some taking longer to learn or enjoy new skills and experiences.

Once babies can move around, they should be encouraged to be as active as possible in a safe, supervised and nurturing play environment. For useful information on how to play actively with babies, see <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/baby-moves/>

## Food safety at mealtimes

### Avoiding choking

Choking can be a cause of injury and death in young children, mainly because their small airways are easily obstructed. It takes time for babies to master the ability to chew and swallow food, and babies might not be able to cough forcefully enough to dislodge an airway obstruction. As babies explore their environments, they also commonly put objects into their mouths — which can easily lead to infant choking.

Food is the most common cause of infant choking. However, small objects, small parts from toys and certain types of behaviour during eating — such as eating while distracted — can also lead to infant choking.

Advise parents and carers:

- Not to give babies pieces of sausage, chunks of meat or cheese, whole grapes or chunks of raw vegetables or fruit that can be swallowed and lodge in the airways.
- Not to give babies hard foods, such as whole nuts or hard sweets, or foods which may be sticky, like marshmallows.
- Babies should never be left alone when eating or drinking.

To see a video and advice on how to cope with a choking baby, go to:

[www.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/learn-first-aid-for-babies-and-children/choking-baby](http://www.redcross.org.uk/first-aid/learn-first-aid-for-babies-and-children/choking-baby)  
or see [www.nhs.uk/choking-baby](http://www.nhs.uk/choking-baby)



### Be safe in a highchair

- As soon as a baby can sit easily without support, a highchair with a broad, stable base should be used.
- The safety straps should always be buckled when the baby is in the highchair. Falling out of highchairs is a surprisingly common reason for trips to A&E.
- Other children should not be allowed to climb or hang on the highchair.





## Food hygiene

Babies and young children are especially vulnerable to the bacteria that can cause food poisoning. To ensure babies are not at risk, the following messages should be given to parents and carers:

- Always wash your hands well before preparing food and after touching raw meat, fish and eggs.
- Keep surfaces clean and keep any pets away from food or surfaces where food is prepared.
- Thoroughly wash all bowls and spoons used for feeding in hot soapy water and keep chopping boards and utensils thoroughly clean.
- Keep raw meats covered and away from other foods in the fridge including cooked or ready-to-eat meats. It's best to store raw meats in clean covered containers at the bottom of the fridge to prevent any drips from falling on to other foods.
- Cook all food thoroughly and cool it until lukewarm before giving it to your baby.
- Don't save and reuse foods that your child has half eaten.
- Wash and peel fruit and vegetables such as apples and carrots.
- Eggs stamped with the British Lion mark can be eaten lightly cooked or raw. Any other eggs (including non-hen's eggs) should be cooked thoroughly until the white and yolk are firm.
- Avoid eating raw or lightly cooked shellfish. Children should only eat shellfish that has been thoroughly cooked.
- Don't give children food or drink when they're sitting on the potty.

## Storing and reheating food

- Cool food as quickly as possible (ideally within one to two hours) and put it in the fridge or freezer. Food placed in the fridge should be eaten within two days.
- Frozen food should be thoroughly defrosted before reheating. The safest way to do this is to leave it in the fridge overnight or use the defrost setting on a microwave.
- When reheating food, make sure it's steaming hot all the way through, and then let it cool down before giving it to your child. If you're using a microwave, always stir the food and check the temperature before feeding it to your child. Don't reheat cooked food more than once.
- To cool food quickly, put it in an airtight container and hold it under a cold running tap. Stir it from time to time so that it cools consistently all the way through.

Source: Information taken from the NHS Choices website.



Eating well  
for 7-9  
month olds



## What should 7-9 month old infants eat and drink?

By 7-9 months of age, a baby should be eating a range of mashed foods and some finger foods, and be offered three meals a day, as well as having milk feeds.

A 7-9 month old baby might have an eating pattern something like the one shown below.

Example menu plan for 7-9 month olds	
<b>On waking</b>	Breastmilk or first infant formula
<b>Breakfast</b>	Cereal, yoghurt or egg-based breakfast Finger food
<b>Sleep</b>	
<b>Lunch</b>	Savoury meal Savoury finger food Breastmilk or first infant formula
<b>Sleep</b>	
<b>Tea</b>	Savoury meal Savoury finger food Breastmilk or first infant formula
<b>Before bed</b>	Breastmilk or first infant formula

### How much food does a 7-9 month old need to complement milk feeds?

To complement the energy that a baby will get from breastmilk or about 600ml of infant formula, it is estimated that a 7-9 month old baby will need approximately 250kcal each day from food. However, this figure is an average and babies will have variable appetites and energy needs and should be encouraged to eat to appetite. Babies of this age will also need about 5.9g protein, 225mg calcium, 4.8mg iron and 1.4mg zinc from food each day to complement the nutrients in breastmilk or infant formula (as well as the fat and carbohydrate and a range of other vitamins and minerals that their foods will provide). We have used these average figures to calculate the amount of food and types of food that will meet a baby's needs at this age.

### Breastfed babies

Breastfed babies will still be fed on demand or responsively by their mums, and as food intake increases, breastmilk intake will decline. It is important to offer increasing amounts of food at meals to ensure babies get all the nutrients they need, as well as the opportunity to get used to a wide range of tastes and textures, and the enjoyment of eating with others. There is no need to know how much milk a breastfed baby has – mums will follow their baby's cues, and of course a breastfeed may also be about comfort and nurturing as well as about a feed.

### Formula-fed babies

Formula-fed babies will probably have about 600ml/day of milk in a bottle or cup at 7-9 months, and how these drinks are spaced between meals will depend on the family schedule. Babies at this age often still have a milk drink on waking, before naps and bedtime. If babies fill up on milk before meals, they may be less interested in trying new foods, so giving milk drinks after meals is recommended.

### Vitamin D

It is perfectly possible for a baby to get all the nutrients he or she needs from food and sunshine but it is recommended that all breastfed babies should receive a supplement of 8.5-10 micrograms of vitamin D a day from birth. Families should always follow the advice of the health professional who advises their family. See pages 11 and 13 for more on vitamins for babies.

## What consistency should the food be?

Babies at this age should be able to manage mashed food with some soft lumps in it.

## Why do babies of this age need finger foods?

It is important that babies learn to feed themselves, and most will be very keen to take an active part in mealtimes. Babies need to learn to bite off small, soft lumps of food, manage them in the mouth and swallow them. Also, picking up foods helps a child to develop manual coordination and dexterity, and learning about textures is an important part of development.

## Finger foods for 7-9 month olds

Finger foods for 7-9 month olds should be soft, so that babies can start to bite pieces of food in their mouth. Soft foods should be cut into manageable-sized pieces, making sure there are no stringy bits, skin or pips.

Soft finger foods suitable at this age include the following:

- *Soft fruit* such as melon, mango, kiwi, banana, peach, or canned fruits in juice (drained)
- *Cooked vegetables* such as carrot, parsnip, green beans, mange-tout or red pepper
- *Cooked starchy foods* such as potato, sweet potato or pasta pieces.



## Portion sizes

It is important to encourage parents and carers not to worry about portion sizes at this age.

There will be mess, there will be days when babies eat a lot less than others, and some foods may be rejected completely the first time they are offered. For more information on how parents and carers can encourage babies to eat well, see page 45.

### The golden rules

- Offer simple and unprocessed foods.
- Let baby get involved in the eating experience.
- Avoid ultra-processed foods.

Offering a variety of the example meals and finger foods shown on pages 56-80 will, alongside breastmilk or infant formula, provide an average 7-9 month old baby with the energy and nutrients they need for growth and activity. (The plates and bowls used in this resource are shown in actual size on page 120.)

Babies should never be forced to eat, and parents and carers should be advised that learning to eat is part of overall development. We don't force babies to crawl at a certain age, and babies will vary in the speed at which they accept new foods and food textures. It is not a race.

## Encouraging drinking from a cup

Infants should be encouraged to drink from an open cup and can be offered sips of water from a small baby cup or an open-handled cup at mealtimes.

The only drinks that are recommended for 7-9 month olds are breastmilk or an appropriate infant formula, and water (see page 12).



### Not just for baby

Many of the ideas for meals in this resource can be eaten by everyone in the family. We show the dishes as you would serve them to a baby, but they can be served without being chopped and mashed and with additional seasoning for other family members.

For ideas for meals that can be eaten by the whole family, see our resource *Eating well recipe book*, available from [www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources)



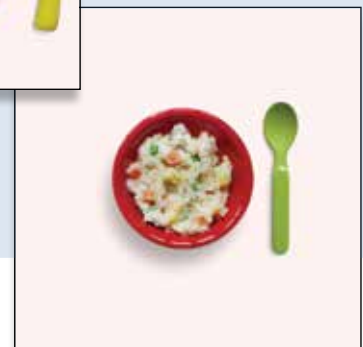
For more advice on how to help babies of this age to eat well, see the *Resources* section on page 124.



Adult-size portion



Portion for a 1-4 year old



Portion for a 7-12 month old



## Example meals for 7-9 month olds

Recipes for the following example meals are given on pages 56-80.

**DF** = Dairy-free **EF** = Egg-free **GF** = Gluten-free **V** = Suitable for vegetarians **VV** = Suitable for vegans

### Breakfasts for 7-9 month olds

Apple porridge made with soya milk. Finger food: Banana	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Creamy egg purée with white beans. Finger food: Egg quarters	<b>GF, V</b>
Greek yoghurt with mixed berries. Finger food: Rice cake fingers	<b>EF, GF, V</b>
Ground rice made with soya milk, with banana. Finger food: Kiwi	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Pear and prune compôte made with soya yoghurt. Finger food: Pear fingers	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Porridge with mango. Finger food: Mango slices	<b>EF, V</b>
Scrambled egg with mashed raspberries. Finger food: Raspberries	<b>GF, V</b>
Weet bisk with soya milk and sultanas. Finger food: Canned peach slices	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Yoghurt with mandarins. Finger food: Toast slices	<b>EF, V</b>

### Savoury meals for 7-9 month olds

African sweet potato stew. Finger food: Sliced avocado	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Avocado and peas with mashed potato. Finger food: Cooked carrots	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Chick pea and spinach dahl with mashed sweet potato. Finger food: Cooked red pepper	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Chicken, callaloo and sweet potato. Finger food: Plantain fingers	<b>EF, GF</b>
Chicken and vegetable stew. Finger food: Sweet potato	<b>DF, EF, GF</b>
Cheesy broccoli and potato. Finger food: Parsnip	<b>GF, V</b>
Kidney bean, apple and root vegetable stew. Finger food: Cooked macaroni	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Lamb and barley hotpot. Finger food: Courgette	<b>DF, EF</b>
Pink risotto. Finger food: Fried tofu cubes	<b>EF, DF, GF, V, VV</b>
Poached haddock, sweetcorn and butternut squash. Finger food: Butternut squash	<b>EF, GF</b>
Pork with rice, parsnip and apple. Finger food: Cauliflower	<b>DF, EF, GF</b>
Potato, mint and soya yoghurt mash and sweet potato. Finger food: Runner beans	<b>EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Rice with red lentils and cauliflower. Finger food: Cooked green beans	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Salmon pie. Finger food: Tenderstem broccoli	<b>EF, GF</b>
Scrambled egg with creamed spinach. Finger food: Potato	<b>GF, V</b>
Spaghetti Bolognese. Finger food: Swede	<b>DF, EF</b>

## Information about the recipes in this resource

The recipes in this resource have all been tested using the recipes and ingredients shown. We have shown a selection of recipes with different finger foods, but of course other combinations of meals and finger foods can also be offered. Preparing home-made food for babies is much cheaper than buying expensive commercial food. Parents and carers can be sure what ingredients they have put in, and hopefully may find that some of the dishes work well for the whole family.

We have used a range of easily obtainable foods to create cost-effective choices that don't require the use of special baby foods.

We have also used simple recipes which don't use a lot of kitchen equipment, or require lots of cookery skill, and which we hope will encourage people to make their own baby foods.

- In some of the recipes we have given some points to remember when cooking for babies, but the key points to remind parents and carers of are:
- Make sure food does not contain bones, gristle, hard or chewy lumps that could be a choking hazard.
  - Make sure food is mashed or chopped to a consistency each baby can manage. You can add some breastmilk, infant formula, animal milk or milk alternative to dishes to make them a little more runny if necessary.
  - Always make sure food is cool enough to give to a baby. The temperature can be tested by putting a small amount of food on the wrist before serving (as you would do with infant formula).
  - Make sure food is safe. Follow all the instructions on page 47.



## Frequently asked questions about preparing food for infants

### Can I use other milk alternatives in recipes?

Where we have used a milk alternative in a recipe, we tested the recipes with unsweetened, calcium-fortified soya milk. We use this as it is usually easy to obtain and is the most cost-effective milk alternative. You could use an unsweetened fortified oat milk or almond milk instead, but you may need to adapt recipes in terms of the amount of milk needed. Avoid rice milk when cooking for babies.

### Can I give my baby ordinary breakfast cereals?

You can offer cereals that have not had any sugar, salt or flavouring added – for example, weet bixes, shredded wheat, instant oat cereal, porridge or puffed wheat.

### Can I use low-fat milk or yoghurt in recipes?

If a recipe just requires a small amount of milk or yoghurt, the type you use won't have a big impact on the nutrient content. However, if the recipe is mainly a milk or yoghurt dish – for example, rice pudding or yoghurt with fruit – always use full-fat or whole milk dairy products.

### Do I need to use baby rice or baby porridge?

No, you can use ordinary ground rice, which is smooth when cooked. And you can use ordinary porridge, but you may want to make it smoother for babies as they start their food journey.

### Can I sweeten sour fruits with sugar?

If you're serving fruits such as rhubarb, cooking apples, damsons or other sour fruit to babies, you can cook the fruit in a little orange juice to make it less sour, or mix it with a sweeter fruit. We have avoided using sugar in our recipes as we have found that, if you add some sweeter fruit to desserts, there is no need to add sugar.

### Can I add herbs and spices to food for babies?

It is important not to add any salt or salted flavourings to food for babies. Fresh or dried herbs and garlic can be used in recipes, but use spices in moderation and introduce them gradually. Babies are unlikely to enjoy very spicy food, particularly if chilli is used, but over time you can introduce more spicing so that children over 1 year of age can take part in family meals. Use your common sense when it comes to food for babies. And remember – all babies are different and some may take longer to enjoy more highly flavoured food than others.

## BREAKFAST

7-9 months

## Apple porridge made with soya milk

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 120g.

**Ingredients**

40g porridge oats

400ml unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk

120g grated apple (1/2 large apple, cored and peeled)

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

**Method**

1. Place all the ingredients in a non-stick saucepan and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring all the time, until the porridge is cooked.
2. Allow to cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Banana.

Serve the banana in fingers, to make it easier for the baby to hold.



## BREAKFAST

## 7-9 months

### Creamy egg purée with white beans

Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

#### Ingredients

4 eggs

1 small (285g) can cannellini beans, drained (drained weight 175g)

1 tablespoon full-fat milk yoghurt

#### Method

1. Hard boil the eggs, cool and shell.
2. Place the eggs, drained beans and yoghurt in a bowl and mash together until smooth. Or place in a blender and mix to a smooth consistency.

**Finger food:** Egg quarters.  
Hard boil the eggs, shell and cut into quarters.





## BREAKFAST

7-9 months

### Greek yoghurt with mixed berries

Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 80g.

#### Ingredients

120g frozen mixed berries

200g Greek yoghurt

#### Method

1. Defrost the mixed berries and mash until smooth.
2. Mix the berries and yoghurt.

**Finger food:** Rice cake fingers.

You can buy standard rice cakes with no added salt and cut them into fingers.



## BREAKFAST

## 7-9 months

### Ground rice made with soya milk, with banana

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 110g.

#### Ingredients

350ml unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk

40g ground rice

1 small banana

#### Method

1. Mix the milk with the ground rice in a saucepan, bring to the boil and then simmer until cooked for about 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Peel and mash the banana.
3. Add a dessertspoon of banana to each bowl of ground rice before serving.

#### Finger food: Kiwi.

Choose a large kiwi so that the slices can be long enough for a little hand to hold easily. Peel the kiwi and cut into slices lengthwise.



## BREAKFAST

7-9 months

## Pear and prune compôte made with soya yoghurt

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

1 ripe or soft-poached pear

60g prunes canned in juice, drained

200g unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk yoghurt

**Method**

1. If the pear is ripe, peel and finely chop it. If firm, peel it and then poach in a little water until soft and chop finely.
2. Finely chop the canned prunes.
3. Combine the chopped fruit and spoon it over the yoghurt.

**Finger food:** Pear fingers.

Keep some of the poached pear to one side for finger food slices.



## BREAKFAST

## 7-9 months

### Porridge with mango

Egg-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 120g.

#### Ingredients

1/4 large mango, peeled and stone removed

80g porridge oats

400ml full-fat milk

#### Method

1. Finely chop the mango and mash into a smooth paste.
2. Place the oats and milk in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer, stirring all the time, until the porridge is cooked.
3. Cool the porridge and add a dessertspoon of mashed mango to each bowl of porridge.

**Finger food:** Mango slices.

Peel the mango, remove the stone and cut into sticks.



## BREAKFAST

7-9 months

## Scrambled egg with mashed raspberries

Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

---

4 eggs

---

4 tablespoons full-fat milk

---

1 tablespoon butter

---

2 tablespoons full-fat plain yoghurt

---

80g raspberries

---

**Method**

1. Crack the eggs into a bowl, mix in the milk and whisk with a fork.
2. Heat the butter in a non-stick frying pan, add the eggs and stir until they scramble.
3. Stir the yoghurt into the scrambled egg to make a smooth mixture.
4. Mash the raspberries until smooth.
5. Serve the scrambled egg with a dessertspoon of raspberries.

**Finger food:** Raspberries.

Raspberries are a soft fruit and are easily crushed in the mouth.





## BREAKFAST

## 7-9 months

### Weet bisk with soya milk and sultanas

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

#### Ingredients

4 weet bisks

350ml unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk

60g sultanas

#### Method

1. Crumble the weet bisks and cover with the soya milk.
2. Chop the sultanas and mix into the cereal mixture.

**Finger food:** Canned peach slices.  
Choose peaches canned in juice and cut into long fingers.



## BREAKFAST

7-9 months

### Yoghurt with mandarins

Egg-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 80g.

#### Ingredients

200g full-fat plain yoghurt

1 small (312g) can mandarins in fruit juice (drained weight 175g)

#### Method

1. Drain the mandarins, and mash two-thirds of them. (The remainder can be kept to use as a finger food at another time.)
2. Mix the yoghurt and mandarins.

**Finger food:** Toast slices.

Lightly toast some bread and spread with butter or fat spread. Cut the toast into fingers, as this is easier for babies to hold and manage in the mouth.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## African sweet potato stew

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and diced
- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks
- 50g frozen green beans, chopped into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon tomato purée
- 150ml water
- 1 tablespoon smooth peanut butter
- 1 small (210g) can kidney beans canned in water, drained (drained weight 130g)

## Method

1. Heat the oil in a pan, over a medium heat.
2. Add the onion and cook gently for 5 minutes or until tender.
3. Add the sweet potato, green beans, tomato purée and water and simmer for 20 minutes or until the sweet potatoes are cooked through. Take off the heat.
4. Stir in the peanut butter and kidney beans. Mash until smooth with soft lumps.
5. Allow to cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Sliced avocado



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

Avocado and peas with  
mashed potato

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 95g.

## Ingredients

- 1 large potato, peeled and diced
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk
- 90g frozen peas
- 1 large ripe avocado, stoned and peeled
- 1/4 tablespoon mint, finely chopped (optional)

## Method

1. Boil the potato until tender, and then drain and mash it with the milk.
2. Boil the peas in water until tender, and then drain and allow to cool.
3. Mash the peas with the avocado and mint.

**Finger food:** Cooked carrots



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Chick pea and spinach dahl with mashed sweet potato

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and diced
- 1 teaspoon garlic purée
- 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 small (210g) can chick peas canned in water, drained (drained weight 130g)
- 150g fresh or frozen spinach
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced

## Method

1. In a frying pan, heat the oil and cook the onion until soft. Add the garlic and turmeric, and cook for 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add the drained chick peas and spinach, and cook until the spinach has wilted. Or, if using frozen spinach, cook until it is defrosted and cooked through.
3. Mash the mixture with a fork to make a smooth mixture, with soft lumps.
4. Boil the sweet potato until tender and then mash it.
5. Serve the cooled chick pea and spinach dahl with with the mashed sweet potato.

**Finger food:** Cooked red pepper



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Chicken, callaloo and sweet potato

Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

120g chicken breast, diced

1 medium sweet potato, peeled and diced

100g callaloo (or 100g spinach leaves, or 2 parcels of frozen spinach)

1 teaspoon dried thyme

150ml water

1 tablespoon full-fat plain yoghurt

**Method**

1. Place all the ingredients except the yoghurt in a saucepan, bring to the boil and simmer gently with the lid on until the chicken and vegetables are soft.
2. Place the mixture in a blender with the yoghurt and make into a smooth mixture with some soft lumps. Or mash until it reaches the desired texture.

**Finger food:** Plantain fingers.

Peel ripe plantain, cut into fingers and dry-fry until softened. Cool before serving.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Chicken and vegetable stew

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

- 1 small onion, peeled and diced
- 1/2 green pepper, cored, de-seeded and diced
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and diced
- 1 large broccoli floret, finely chopped
- 120g chicken breast, diced
- 1 small can (200g) tomatoes
- 100ml water

**Method**

1. Place all the ingredients in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Simmer with the lid on until all the vegetables and chicken are cooked.
2. Blend until smooth with soft lumps. Or mash well until the desired texture is achieved.

**Finger food:** Sweet potato.

Peel a sweet potato and either boil, bake or microwave until soft. Cut into fingers.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Cheesy broccoli and potato

Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

1 large potato, peeled and diced

1/2 head broccoli, florets cut off

2 tablespoons cream cheese

**Method**

1. Cook the potato and broccoli until both are soft.
2. Mash the vegetables with the cream cheese until it makes a smooth mixture with some soft lumps.

**Finger food:** Parsnip.

Peel parsnips and cut into fingers, removing any woody stems. Boil until tender.





## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Kidney bean, apple and root vegetable stew

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 large parsnip, peeled and diced
- 1/8 swede, peeled and diced
- 200ml water
- 1/2 apple, peeled, cored and diced
- 1 small (210g) can kidney beans in water, drained (drained weight 130g)

### Method

1. Put the parsnip and swede in a saucepan with the water and bring to the boil.
2. Turn down the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Add the apple and kidney beans and simmer for a further 10 minutes until the vegetables are thoroughly cooked.
4. Mash with the cooking liquid until mostly smooth, with some soft lumps.

**Finger food:** Cooked macaroni or pasta shapes



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Lamb and barley hotpot

Dairy-free Egg-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

- 60g pearl barley
- 120g lamb, finely chopped (Choose lean leg steak or fillet, or use meat leftover from a roast dinner.)
- 1/2 onion, peeled and diced
- 1 medium carrot, peeled and diced
- 1 teaspoon ground rosemary
- 200ml water

**Method**

1. Soak the pearl barley in water for several hours, and then drain.
2. Place the pearl barley and all the remaining ingredients in a saucepan, bring to the boil, and simmer until the meat, vegetables and pearl barley are soft.
3. Blend until smooth with soft lumps. Or mash until you get the required consistency.

**Finger food:** Courgette.

Wash and top and tail a courgette, cut it into fingers, and steam until soft.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Pink risotto

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 small onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 50g basmati rice
- 100ml boiling water
- 150g (2 or 3) cooked beetroot (vacuum-packed, not in vinegar), finely diced
- 1/2 small (220g) can chopped tomatoes

## Method

1. Heat the oil in a saucepan and sauté the onion until soft.
2. Add the rice and stir until well coated.
3. Pour the boiling water over the rice, cover and cook for 8 minutes.
4. Stir in the diced beetroot, reduce the heat, cover and cook for about 12 minutes or until the water has been absorbed.
5. Add the chopped tomatoes and mash until smooth, with soft lumps. Allow to cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Fried tofu cubes.

It can be difficult for a baby to hold tofu. To make firmer cubes, remove excess liquid by placing the tofu block under a plate and wait for 5 to 10 minutes. Cut the tofu into cubes and gently fry in vegetable oil on all sides until lightly browned. Allow to cool before serving.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Poached haddock, sweetcorn and butternut squash

Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

120g haddock, skin and bones removed

100ml full-fat milk

1/2 butternut squash, peeled, de-seeded and diced (If making finger food at the same time, leave some as sticks and boil at the same time.)

2 tablespoons frozen sweetcorn (or sweetcorn canned in water)

**Method**

1. Poach the haddock in the milk until cooked. Flake into the milk when cooked, making sure there are no bones.
2. In a separate saucepan, boil the squash until soft. Then add the sweetcorn and leave in the water for 1 to 2 minutes.
3. Drain the squash and sweetcorn and mix with the fish and milk. Mash together until smooth with soft lumps.

**Finger food:** Butternut squash.

Peel and de-seed the squash, cut into fingers and boil until soft.





## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Pork with rice, parsnip and apple

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

---

120g lean pork, diced

---

1 dessert apple, peeled, cored and diced

---

1 medium parsnip, peeled and diced

---

2 tablespoons white rice

---

300ml water

---

**Method**

1. Place all the ingredients in a saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring all the time. Place a lid on the pan and simmer until the rice, pork and vegetables are cooked.
2. Blend until smooth with soft lumps, or mash to the desired consistency.

**Finger food:** Cauliflower.

Cut florets with stalks attached to make a natural handle, and steam until tender.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

Potato, mint and soya yoghurt mash  
and sweet potato

Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

1 large potato, peeled and diced

50g unsweetened soya yoghurt

1/2 tablespoon chopped mint

1 large sweet potato, peeled and diced

## Method

1. Boil the potato in water until tender.
2. Drain the potato and then mash it with the yoghurt and mint.
3. Boil the sweet potato until soft and then mash it. Allow to cool, and then serve with the potato and yoghurt mixture.

**Finger food:** Runner beans.

Top and tail the runner beans and remove any stringy pieces. Steam until tender and cut into manageable pieces.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

Rice with red lentils and cauliflower Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

- 1/2 large carrot, peeled and diced
- 1/2 medium sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 1/2 cooking apple, cored, peeled and diced
- 40g red lentils
- 200ml water
- 6 cauliflower florets
- 60g white rice, cooked in boiling water until tender

**Method**

1. Place the carrot, sweet potato and apple in a saucepan with the lentils and water and bring to the boil.
2. Turn down the heat, cover and simmer for 30 minutes.
3. Add the cauliflower and cook for a further 10 minutes.
4. Mash until smooth, with soft lumps, and allow to cool before serving.
5. Serve with the cooked white rice.

**Finger food:** Cooked green beans.  
Top and tail the beans and steam until tender.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Salmon pie

Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

1 large potato, peeled and diced

120g salmon, skin and bones removed

2 tablespoons milk

1 teaspoon butter

1 tablespoon full-fat yoghurt

**Method**

1. Boil the potatoes until cooked.
2. Poach the salmon in the milk. When cooked, mash into the milk, making sure there are no bones.
3. Mash the potato with the butter and the yoghurt and mix in the fish mixture.

**Finger food:** Tenderstem broccoli.  
Tenderstem broccoli are a good shape for babies to hold. Cook until the florets are tender.





## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Scrambled egg with creamed spinach

Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

- 4 eggs
- 4 tablespoons milk
- 4 frozen spinach bundles or 200g raw spinach
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoons plain fromage frais

**Method**

1. Break the eggs into a dish and add the milk. Whisk with a fork.
2. If using frozen spinach, place in a pan or microwave to defrost. If using fresh spinach, wash well leaving some water on the leaves, place the spinach in a pan and let it reduce until cooked and softened.
3. Heat the butter in a non-stick pan and scramble the eggs until soft and cooked well.
4. Add the fromage frais to the spinach and blend or mash to a smooth consistency.
5. Serve the eggs and spinach separately or mixed together.

**Finger food:** Potato.

Peel the potatoes, cut into pieces, and boil until tender.



## SAVOURY MEAL

7-9 months

## Spaghetti Bolognese

Dairy-free Egg-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

- 1/2 onion, finely diced
- 1 teaspoon garlic purée
- 120g lean minced beef
- 1/2 large (400g) can or 1 small (200g) can chopped tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon tomato purée
- 1/2 teaspoon dried mixed herbs
- 50g soup pasta or small pasta shapes

**Method**

1. Place all the ingredients except the pasta in a saucepan. Bring to the boil and then place a lid on and simmer until the mince is cooked.
2. In a separate pan, boil the pasta until tender, and then drain.
3. Mix together the meat mixture and pasta and blend until smooth with soft lumps. Or mash to the required consistency.

**Finger food:** Swede.

Peel the swede, cut into fingers, and boil until soft.





Eating well  
for 10-12  
month olds



## What should 10-12 month old infants eat and drink?

By 10-12 months of age, a baby should be able to manage a range of minced and chopped foods, and be offered three meals a day, as well as having breastfeeds or about three drinks of milk.

A 10-12 month old baby might have an eating pattern something like the one shown below.



Example menu plan for 10-12 month olds	
<b>Breakfast</b>	Cereal or egg-based breakfast Fruit as a finger food Breastmilk or first infant formula
<b>Sleep</b>	
<b>Lunch</b>	Savoury meal Savoury finger food Dessert Water in a cup to drink Breastmilk or first infant formula
<b>Sleep</b>	
<b>Tea</b>	Savoury meal Savoury finger food Dessert Fruit finger food
<b>Before bed</b>	Breastmilk or first infant formula

### How much food does a 10-12 month old baby need?

To complement the energy that a baby will get from breastmilk or about 400ml of infant formula, it is estimated that a 10-12 month old will need about 450kcal from food. However, this figure is an average and babies will have variable appetites and energy needs and should be encouraged to eat to appetite. It is estimated that a 10-12 month old will need about 9.7g protein, 325mg calcium, 5.8mg iron and 2.6mg zinc from their food each day (as well as the fat, carbohydrate and a range of other vitamins and minerals that their foods will provide). We have used these average figures to calculate the amount of food and types of food that will meet a baby's needs at this age.

### Breastfed babies

Breastfed babies will still be fed on demand or responsively by their mums, and as food intake increases, breastmilk intake will decline. It is important to offer increasing amounts of food at meals to ensure babies get all the nutrients they need, as well as the opportunity to get used to a wide range of tastes and textures, and the enjoyment of eating with others. There is no need to know how much milk a breastfed baby has – mums will follow their baby's cues, and of course a breastfeed may also be about comfort and nurturing as well as about a feed.

### Formula-fed babies

Formula-fed babies will probably have about 400ml of infant formula a day in a bottle or cup at 10-12 months. How these drinks are spaced throughout the day will depend on the family schedule. It is important babies don't fill up on milk before meals as they may be less interested in trying new foods and eating increasing amounts, so milk drinks may fit in better before naps or after meals.

### Vitamin D

It is perfectly possible for a baby to get all the nutrients he or she needs from food and sunshine but it is recommended that all breastfed babies should receive a supplement of 8.5-10 micrograms of vitamin D a day from birth. Families should always follow the advice of the health professional who advises their family. See pages 11 and 13 for more on vitamins for babies.



## What consistency should the food be?

Foods for babies of this age should be minced and chopped rather than mashed, and babies should be introduced to some harder foods to get them used to biting and chewing. Hard foods should be cut into smaller pieces so that the baby can't bite off too large a piece and choke.

## Finger foods for 10-12 month olds

By 10-12 months, babies can start to have a bigger range of finger foods with their meals. These can include raw fruit and vegetables, and crunchy and chewy foods.

Examples of finger foods for 10-12 month olds include the following:

- *Raw fruit and vegetable pieces* (with any pips and stones removed) – such as apple, pear, banana, orange segments, halved cherries or grapes, cucumber, carrot, pepper or green beans
- *Dried fruit* – such as chopped soft dried prunes or ready-to-eat apricots
- *Starchy foods* such as breadsticks, rice cakes, bread crusts, pitta bread strips, toast, potato, yam or pasta
- *Other foods*
  - soft cooked meat or fish (without bones)
  - hard-boiled egg
  - cooked soft peas and chopped beans
  - pulses such as cooked lentils
  - cheese
  - nut or seed butters (such as tahini) on strips of bread or pitta bread.

## Portion sizes

It is important to encourage parents and carers not to worry about portion sizes at this age. There will be mess, there will be days when babies eat a lot less than others, and some foods may be rejected completely the first time they are offered. For more information on how to encourage babies to eat well, see page 45.

### The golden rules

- Offer simple and unprocessed foods.
- Let baby get involved in the eating experience.
- Avoid ultra-processed foods.

Offering a variety of the example meals and finger foods shown on pages 87-118 will, alongside breastmilk or infant formula, provide an average 10-12 month old baby with the energy and nutrients they need for growth and activity. (The plates and bowls used in this resource are shown in actual size on page 120.)

Babies should never be forced to eat, and parents and carers need to understand that learning to eat is part of overall development. We don't force babies to crawl at a certain age, and babies will vary in the speed at which they accept new foods and foods textures. It is not a race.



## Encouraging drinking from a cup

The only drinks that are recommended for 10-12 month olds are breastmilk or an appropriate infant formula milk, and water (see page 12). Infants should be encouraged to drink from an open cup and can be offered sips of water from a small baby cup or an open-handled cup at mealtimes.



## Using spoons

It is important to encourage infants to feed themselves with their fingers and also to use cutlery. Babies enjoy holding spoons and can be gently encouraged to use them to feed themselves at mealtimes, bearing in mind that this will be a slow, variable and messy process at times.



## Not just for baby

Many of the ideas for meals in this resource can be eaten by everyone in the family. We show the dishes as you would serve them to a baby, but they can be served without being chopped and mashed and with additional seasoning for other family members.

For ideas for meals that can be eaten by the whole family, see our resource *Eating well recipe book*, available from [www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources)

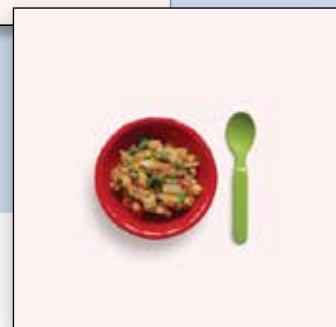
Adult-size portion



Portion for a 1-4 year old



Portion for a 7-12 month old



## Example meals for 10-12 month olds

**DF** = Dairy-free **EF** = Egg-free **GF** = Gluten-free **V** = Suitable for vegetarians **VV** = Suitable for vegans

### Breakfasts for 10-12 month olds

Eggy bread fingers with strawberries	<b>V</b>
Gram flour 'omelette' with baked beans. Finger food: Fried mushrooms	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Instant oat cereal with milk, and strawberries. Finger food: Kiwi	<b>EF, V</b>
Porridge made with soya milk, with apple and fig compôte. Finger food: Apple fingers	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Porridge with yoghurt and dates. Finger food: Rice cake fingers	<b>EF, V</b>
Scrambled egg with canned tomatoes. Finger food: Toast slices with fat spread	<b>V</b>
Shredded wheat with soya milk and raisins. Finger food: Sliced banana	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Weet bisks with full-fat milk and canned mandarins. Finger food: Dried apple	<b>EF, V</b>

### Savoury meals for 10-12 month olds

Butternut squash and coconut stew. Finger food: Pieces of boiled potato	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Chicken and mushroom pie. Finger food: Peas	<b>EF, GF</b>
Creamy chicken and leek hotpot. Finger food: Red pepper	<b>EF, GF</b>
Egg-fried rice. Finger food: Broccoli	<b>DF, GF, V</b>
Fish pie. Finger food: Courgette fingers	<b>EF, GF</b>
Goulash. Finger food: Bread pieces	<b>DF, EF</b>
Jacket potato with beef stir-fry. Finger food: Cauliflower	<b>DF, EF, GF</b>
Jerk chicken with rice and beans. Finger food: Yam sticks	<b>DF, EF, GF</b>
Lentil and carrot soup. Finger food: Pitta bread	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Mediterranean pie. Finger food: Rice cake fingers	<b>EF, GF, V</b>
Pasta with savoury soya mince. Finger food: Cooked green beans	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Peanut butter and banana sandwiches. Finger food: Carrot sticks	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Potato, pea and cauliflower mash. Finger food: Fried tofu cubes	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Tofu, red pepper and rice. Finger food: Baby sweetcorn	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Tuna pasta. Finger food: Tomatoes	<b>DF</b>
Turkey and vegetable pilaf. Finger food: Cucumber sticks	<b>DF, EF, GF</b>
Vegetable biryani. Finger food: Okra	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>

### Desserts for 10-12 month olds

Apricot egg custard. Finger food: Melon	<b>GF, V</b>
Baked apple with Greek yoghurt. Finger food: Strawberries	<b>EF, GF, V</b>
Cottage cheese and fruit platter	<b>EF, GF, V</b>
Ground rice pudding with stewed rhubarb and plum. Finger food: Plum slices	<b>EF, GF, V</b>
Mango fool. Finger food: Watermelon sticks	<b>DF, EF, GF, V, VV</b>
Semolina made with soya milk, and prune purée. Finger food: Pineapple	<b>DF, EF, V, VV</b>
Yoghurt with dates. Finger food: Pear	<b>EF, GF, V</b>

## Information about the recipes in this resource

The recipes in this resource have all been tested using the recipes and ingredients shown. We have shown a selection of recipes with different finger foods, but of course other combinations of meals and finger foods can also be offered. Preparing home-made food for babies is much cheaper than buying expensive commercial food. Parents and carers can be sure what ingredients they have put in, and hopefully may find some of the dishes work well for the whole family.

We have used a range of easily obtainable foods to create cost-effective choices that don't require the use of special baby foods.

We have also used simple recipes which don't use a lot of kitchen equipment, or require lots of cookery skill, and which we hope will encourage people to make their own baby foods.

- In some of the recipes we have given some points to remember when cooking for babies, but the key points to remind parents and carers of are:
  - Make sure food does not contain bones, gristle, hard or chewy lumps that could be a choking hazard.
  - Make sure food is mashed or chopped to a consistency each baby can manage. You can add some breastmilk, infant formula, animal milk or milk alternative to dishes to make them a little more runny if necessary.
  - Always make sure food is cool enough to give a baby. The temperature can be tested by putting a small amount of food on the wrist before serving (as you would do with infant formula).
  - Make sure food is safe. Follow all the instructions on page 47.
- For some frequently asked questions about making these recipes, see page 55.





**BREAKFAST****10-12 months****Eggy bread fingers with strawberries**

Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 80g.

**Ingredients**

- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons full-fat milk
- 2 slices bread
- 2 teaspoons butter
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 120g strawberries, washed, hulled and cut into pieces

**Method**

1. Break the eggs into a bowl, add the milk and whisk with a fork.
2. Soak the bread in the egg mixture, turning to coat both sides.
3. Heat the butter in a frying pan and cook the eggy bread on both sides until the egg is cooked through.
4. Sprinkle with cinnamon.
5. Cut into slices and serve with the strawberries.



**BREAKFAST**

10-12 months

**Gram flour 'omelette' with baked beans**

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

- 4 tablespoons chick pea flour (also called gram flour)
- 150ml water
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 small can (220g) low-salt and low-sugar baked beans

**Method**

1. Mix the chick pea flour with the water to form a smooth batter.
2. Heat the vegetable oil in a frying pan.
3. Pour in the batter and cook as a pancake until set. Cut into fingers.
4. Serve with baked beans. Make sure the 'omelette' and beans are cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Fried mushrooms

## BREAKFAST

## 10-12 months

### Instant oat cereal with milk, and strawberries

Egg-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 140g.

#### Ingredients

80g instant oat cereal

400ml hot full-fat milk

120g strawberries, washed and hulled

#### Method

1. Mix the instant oat cereal with the hot milk and mix until smooth. Add more milk if necessary to get the desired consistency.
2. Mash the strawberries and place a dessertspoon of strawberries onto the cereal.

#### Finger food: Kiwi.

Choose a larger kiwi to make slices that can be held easily. Peel and slice the kiwi.



## BREAKFAST

10-12 months

Porridge made with soya milk,  
with apple and fig compôte

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 150g (120g porridge and 30g compôte).

**Porridge****Ingredients**

75g rolled oats

500ml unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk

**Method**

1. Place the oats and milk in a non-stick saucepan.
2. Heat gently until boiling, and then turn the heat down and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the oats are softened and have absorbed the milk.
3. Serve the porridge with a tablespoon of compôte.

**Apple and fig compôte****Ingredients**

1/2 small apple, peeled, cored and finely chopped

4 figs (dried, ready to eat), finely chopped

1/3 teaspoon cinnamon powder

100ml water

**Method**

1. Place all the ingredients in a pan and bring to the boil, and then simmer until the fruit is soft. Cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Apple fingers





**BREAKFAST****10-12 months****Porridge with yoghurt and dates****Egg-free** Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 110g.

**Ingredients**

60g porridge oats

300ml full-fat milk

80g full-fat plain yoghurt

10 dates, finely chopped

**Method**

1. Mix the porridge oats and milk together, bring to the boil stirring all the time and simmer until cooked.
2. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. Mix in the yoghurt.
3. Sprinkle with the chopped dates.

**Finger food:** Rice cake fingers.

You can cut fingers from standard salt-free rice cakes.



## BREAKFAST

10-12 months

## Scrambled egg with canned tomatoes

Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 110g.

**Ingredients**

---

4 eggs

---

4 tablespoons full-fat milk

---

1 tablespoon butter

---

1 small (200g) can chopped tomatoes

---

**Method**

1. Break the eggs into a bowl, add the milk and whisk with a fork.
2. Melt the butter in a frying pan, add the eggs and scramble until cooked through.
3. Empty the tomatoes into a bowl and chop to remove any cores but leaving some soft lumps. Gently warm if desired.
4. Serve the scrambled egg with the tomato.

**Finger food:** Toast slices with fat spread. Lightly toast bread, spread with butter or fat spread and cut into fingers.



**BREAKFAST****10-12 months****Shredded wheat with soya milk and raisins**

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 140g.

**Ingredients**

4 shredded wheat

450ml unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk

40g raisins

**Method**

1. Crumble the shredded wheat and soak in soya milk.
2. Sprinkle in the raisins and stir.

**Finger food:** Sliced banana



**BREAKFAST**

10-12 months

**Weet bisks with full-fat milk and canned mandarins**

Egg-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 120g.

**Ingredients**

---

4 weet bisks

---

400ml full-fat milk

---

1/2 small (312g) can mandarins, drained (drained weight 80g)

---

**Method**

1. Crumble the weet bisk into the milk and mix.
2. Mash the mandarin orange and put a dessertspoon on each bowl.

**Finger food:** Dried apple





## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

Butternut squash and coconut stew Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 120g.

**Ingredients**

1/3 butternut squash, peeled, de-seeded and finely cubed

1 small carrot, peeled and finely chopped

1 teaspoon vegetable oil

1 small onion, peeled and finely diced

1 tablespoon canned or frozen sweetcorn

200ml coconut milk (half of a 400ml can)

**Method**

1. Cook the butternut squash and carrot in boiling water until soft.
2. Heat the oil in a pan, add the onion and cook until softened.
3. Add the squash, carrot, sweetcorn and coconut milk to the onion and simmer, with the lid on, for about 10 minutes.
4. Cool and then mash or chop to the desired consistency.

**Finger food:** Pieces of boiled potato



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Chicken and mushroom pie

Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

- 1 large potato, washed and diced, or peeled and diced
- 1 tablespoon full-fat milk
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 small onion, peeled and diced
- 4 mushrooms, diced
- 2 tablespoons frozen peas
- 100g chicken breast, diced
- 100ml water
- 1 teaspoon cornflour
- 1 tablespoon soft cheese

## Method

1. Boil the potato in water until tender. Drain well. Add the milk and mash.
2. In a pan, heat the vegetable oil and fry the diced onion for several minutes to soften.
3. Add the diced mushrooms, peas, chicken and water and cook for 15 minutes until the chicken is cooked.
4. Blend the cornflour with a little water to make a smooth paste and add to the mixture, stirring. Bring to the boil and cook for a few minutes to thicken the mixture.
5. Add the mashed potato and soft cheese and mix well.
6. Chop or mash to the desired consistency.

Finger food: Peas



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Creamy chicken and leek hotpot

Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 medium leek, washed and diced
- 1/2 medium carrot, peeled and diced
- 1 small stalk celery, washed and diced
- 100g chicken breast, diced
- 1/4 teaspoon mixed dried herbs
- 1 medium potato, washed and diced
- 150ml water
- 1 tablespoon soft cheese

## Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the leeks, carrots, celery, chicken and herbs and fry for 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Add the potatoes and water, bring to the boil and simmer with the lid on for about 15 minutes until the vegetables and chicken are cooked.
3. Turn off the heat, and stir in the soft cheese until evenly distributed.
4. Cool and chop or mash to the desired consistency.

**Finger food:** Red pepper



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Egg-fried rice

Dairy-free Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

---

150ml water

---

50g white rice

---

2 eggs

---

1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil

---

1/2 small onion, peeled and diced

---

1/4 red pepper, de-seeded and diced

---

**Method**

1. Bring the water to the boil, add the rice and bring to the boil again. Place a lid on the pan and simmer for about 5 to 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and leave the rice in the pan with the lid on. It should absorb all the water and be tender.
2. Break the eggs into a bowl and beat them until the yolks and whites are mixed.
3. In a frying pan, heat the oil and fry the onion and red pepper until they soften.
4. Add the rice to the vegetables and heat through.
5. Pour the egg mixture over the rice and, stirring all the time, cook the mixture until the eggs are cooked.
6. Chop or mash to the desired consistency.

**Finger food:** Broccoli





## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Fish pie

Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

- 1 large potato, washed and diced
- 2 tablespoons semi-skimmed milk
- 100g fresh or frozen white fish fillets
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 50ml semi-skimmed milk
- 1 teaspoon cornflour
- 2 tablespoons frozen mixed vegetables
- Pinch of black pepper

**Finger food:** Courgette fingers

## Method

1. Boil the potatoes in water for about 15 minutes until soft. Drain and mash with the 2 tablespoons of milk.
2. Place the fish fillets in a dish and either microwave gently for about 5 minutes to cook them, or place them between two heatproof plates over the pan of boiling water cooking the potatoes. (The heat from the steam will cook the fish.) Flake the fish, making sure that there are no bones remaining.
3. In a separate pan, heat the butter and add the milk. Blend the cornflour with a little water and add this to the mixture. Bring to the boil, cook for a few minutes until it thickens, and then add the mixed vegetables. Turn off the heat and add the fish and black pepper.
4. Mix together the fish mixture and the mashed potato.
5. Chop or mash to the desired consistency.



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Goulash

Dairy-free Egg-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 small onion, peeled and diced
- 100g lean pork meat, diced
- 1/4 green pepper, de-seeded and sliced
- 1 medium potato, washed and diced
- 1 small (200g) can chopped tomatoes
- 1/4 can (400g) cannellini beans drained and rinsed (60g drained weight)
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika powder (This can be left out if a less spicy taste is preferred.)
- 1/2 teaspoon dried mixed herbs

## Method

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a large pan and fry the onion and pork until the meat is browned on all sides and the onion is starting to soften.
2. Add the green pepper and potato and fry for 1 or 2 minutes.
3. Add all the other ingredients, bring to the boil and then simmer with a lid on for 15 to 20 minutes until all the ingredients are cooked.
4. Chop or mash the mixture to the required consistency.

**Finger food:** Bread pieces



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Jacket potato with beef stir-fry

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

4 baby potatoes

1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil

1/2 small onion, peeled and diced

100g lean beef, diced

1 medium carrot, peeled and sliced into thin sticks

1 small courgette, washed, topped and tailed, and sliced into thin sticks

1/4 red pepper, cored and seeds removed, and cut into slices

**Method**

1. Cook the potatoes in their jackets in a microwave or oven.
2. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the diced onion and beef and fry, stirring all the time, until the meat is browned.
3. Add the carrot, courgette and red pepper and stir-fry over a high heat until the vegetables are softening and the meat is cooked.
4. Chop and mash the potato and filling together to the desired consistency.

**Finger food:** Cauliflower



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Jerk chicken with rice and beans

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 110g.

## For the chicken, rice and beans

## Ingredients

- 100g chicken breast, diced
- 1 teaspoon jerk seasoning (See recipe below.)
- 1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 small onion, peeled and diced
- 1/2 green pepper, de-seeded and sliced
- 1/4 large can (410g) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed (drained weight 60g)
- 50g white rice
- 300ml water

## Method

1. Mix all the jerk seasoning ingredients together.
2. Coat the chicken in 1 teaspoon of the jerk seasoning and stir well. Leave in the fridge for an hour to marinate. (You can use the rest of the jerk seasoning for other dishes.)
3. In a large saucepan, heat the oil and fry the onion and green pepper for 2 to 3 minutes.

## For the jerk seasoning

## Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic purée
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Finger food: Yam sticks

4. Add the chicken and cook for 2 to 3 minutes.
5. Add the kidney beans, rice and water to the mixture and bring to the boil.
6. Simmer for about 20 minutes with the lid on the pan until the rice has absorbed the water and the chicken and vegetables are cooked.
7. Chop or mash to the required consistency.





## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Lentil and carrot soup

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

**Ingredients**

1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil

1/2 small onion, peeled and diced

1/2 teaspoon garlic paste

1 large carrot, peeled and diced

50g dried red lentils

300ml water

**Method**

1. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the onion, garlic and carrots, and fry gently, stirring regularly, for 5 minutes.
2. Add the lentils and water and bring to the boil, stirring occasionally.
3. Simmer for about 20 minutes with a lid on until the lentils are soft.
4. Mash or liquidise to make the soup the texture you want. Cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Pitta bread



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Mediterranean pie

Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

1 large potato, washed and diced
1 tablespoon full-fat milk
1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 small onion, peeled and diced
1/2 teaspoon garlic paste
1/4 red pepper, washed, de-seeded and sliced
10 green beans, frozen or fresh, cut into small pieces
1/4 can (400g) chick peas, drained and rinsed (drained weight 60g)
2 tablespoons tomato purée
1 teaspoon dried mixed herbs
10g sunflower seeds, crushed

## Method

1. Boil the potato in water until soft. Drain and mash with the milk.
2. In a pan, heat the vegetable oil. Add the onion and garlic and fry gently, stirring, until the onion softens.
3. Add the red pepper, green beans, chick peas, tomato purée and dried mixed herbs. Simmer until all the vegetables are soft.
4. Mix the vegetable mixture with the mashed potato and chop or mash the pie to the desired consistency.
5. Sprinkle crushed sunflower seeds on the top.

**Finger food:** Rice cake fingers



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Pasta with savoury soya mince

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 120g.

**Ingredients**

---

100g macaroni

---

1 teaspoon vegetable oil

---

1/2 small onion, peeled and finely diced

---

120g frozen soya mince

---

1 tablespoon tomato purée

---

2 tablespoons water

---

**Method**

1. Cook the macaroni in boiling water until tender, following the instructions on the packet.
2. Heat the oil in a pan and fry the onion until soft.
3. Add the frozen soya mince, tomato purée and water, and simmer until the ingredients are thoroughly heated through.
4. Chop the cooked macaroni and mix it with the mince sauce. Allow to cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Cooked green beans



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Peanut butter and banana sandwiches

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 70g.

**Ingredients**

4 slices wholemeal bread

80g (2 heaped tablespoons) smooth peanut butter

1 large banana, peeled and sliced

**Method**

1. Spread two slices of bread with peanut butter and cover with sliced banana.
2. Add the other two slices, and cut the sandwiches into fingers.

**Finger food:** Carrot sticks





## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Potato, pea and cauliflower mash

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 120g.

## Ingredients

2 large potatoes, peeled and diced

1/4 cauliflower cut into florets

4 tablespoons frozen peas, defrosted

1 tablespoon dairy-free fat spread

1 tablespoon unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk

## Method

1. Boil the potato until tender. Place a colander over the potato as it cooks and steam the cauliflower in it until soft.
2. Drain the potato and return it immediately to the pan with the cauliflower and peas. Stir until the peas are warmed through.
3. Add the fat spread and milk, and mash the ingredients together to a lumpy consistency.

**Finger food:** Fried tofu cubes.

It can be difficult for a baby to hold tofu. To make firmer cubes, remove excess liquid by placing the tofu block under a plate and wait for 5 to 10 minutes. Cut the tofu into cubes and gently fry in vegetable oil on all sides until lightly browned. Allow to cool before serving.



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Tofu, red pepper and rice

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 120g.

## Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 small onion, peeled and finely diced
- 1/2 red pepper, de-seeded and finely chopped
- 50g white rice
- 150ml boiling water
- 120g tofu, drained

## Method

1. Heat the oil in a pan and fry the onions until soft.
2. Add the red pepper and stir for about 1 minute.
3. Add the rice and boiling water, stir and then simmer with a lid on for about 10 minutes until the rice has absorbed the water.
4. Cut the tofu into cubes and add it to the rice mixture.
5. Allow to cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Baby sweetcorn

## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Tuna pasta

Dairy-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

50g small pasta pieces or spaghetti
1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 small onion, peeled and diced
1/4 green pepper, de-seeded and diced
1/4 teaspoon garlic paste
1/4 teaspoon dried mixed herbs
1/2 large can (400g) chopped tomatoes (200g)
1/2 can (185g) tuna in water or oil, drained (70g drained weight)

## Method

1. Boil the pasta in a pan of water until it is cooked, following the instructions on the packet.
2. Heat the oil in a saucepan and add the onion, pepper, garlic and herbs and fry, stirring regularly, until the onions and peppers are soft.
3. Add the canned tomatoes and tuna and heat through.
4. Chop the cooked pasta into small pieces and stir thoroughly into the sauce. Chop or mash to get the right consistency.

**Finger food:** Tomatoes.

Serve either large wedges of tomato that can be held, or chopped up cherry tomatoes. Cherry tomatoes can be a choking hazard if served whole.



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Turkey and vegetable pilaf

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoon garlic paste

1/2 teaspoon dried mixed herbs

100g turkey breast, diced

1/4 green pepper, de-seeded and diced

1/4 large tomato, diced

1 tablespoon frozen sweetcorn

50g white rice

200ml water

## Method

1. Heat the oil in a large pan and add the garlic, herbs and diced turkey. Cook for a few minutes, stirring, until the turkey is slightly browned.
2. Add the green pepper, tomato, sweetcorn and rice, and cook gently for 1 minute.
3. Pour over the water, bring to the boil stirring all the time, and then simmer gently with a lid on until the rice and vegetables are cooked and soft.
4. Chop or mash to the desired consistency.

**Finger food:** Cucumber sticks



## SAVOURY MEAL

10-12 months

## Vegetable biryani

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

1/2 tablespoon vegetable oil
1/4 teaspoon mild curry powder
1/2 small onion, peeled and diced
1/2 small carrot, peeled and diced
1/2 medium potato, washed and diced (no need to peel)
2 tablespoons frozen peas
1/8 cauliflower, broken into small pieces
1/4 large can (400g) chickpeas, drained and rinsed (60g drained weight)
50g white rice
200ml water

## Method

1. Heat the oil in a pan, add the curry powder and onion, and cook for a few minutes until the onion softens.
2. Add the carrot, potato, peas, cauliflower, chickpeas and rice and stir for 1 minute.
3. Pour over the water and simmer gently with the lid on the pan until the rice is tender and the vegetables are all cooked.
4. Chop or mash to the required consistency.

**Finger food:** Okra.

Okra are a good shape and size for a finger food. Top and tail them and boil or steam until tender.



## DESSERT

10-12 months

## Apricot egg custard

Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 60g.

**Ingredients**

---

2 eggs

---

250ml full-fat milk

---

5 soft dried apricots, finely chopped

---

A sprinkling of ground nutmeg or cloves

---

**Method**

1. Beat the eggs, milk and diced apricot together.
2. Place in a greased heatproof bowl and sprinkle with the ground nutmeg or cloves.
3. Bake in an oven at 180°C / Gas mark 5 for about 45 minutes until set.
4. Cool before serving.

**Finger food:** Melon



## DESSERT

10-12 months

## Baked apple with Greek yoghurt

Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 80g.

**Ingredients**

2 dessert apples, cored but with the skin left on

A sprinkling of cinnamon

1 tablespoon water

120g Greek yoghurt

**Method**

1. Cut a line through the skin of the apples around the centre of each, sprinkle with a little cinnamon and place in a microwave or ovenproof dish with the water.
2. Either cover with clingfilm and microwave for about 1 or 2 minutes, or cover with foil and bake in an oven for 30 to 40 minutes. The apples should be soft inside the skin.
3. Finely chop the apple or mash it, making sure there are no large pieces of skin.
4. Serve with Greek yoghurt.

**Finger food:** Strawberries



**DESSERT**

10-12 months

**Cottage cheese and fruit platter**

Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 80g.

**Ingredients**

80g cottage cheese

4 large or 8 small strawberries, hulled, washed and sliced

1/4 melon, skinned, de-seeded and sliced

1/2 mango, skinned, de-stoned and sliced

**Method**

1. Place the cottage cheese in a small bowl and serve with the pieces of fruit.





## DESSERT

10-12 months

## Ground rice pudding with stewed rhubarb and plum

Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 60g.

## Ground rice pudding

## Ingredients

25g ground rice

200ml full-fat milk

## Method

1. Place the ground rice in a pan with the milk, bring to the boil stirring all the time, and simmer until the mixture has thickened and cooked.

## Stewed rhubarb and plum

## Ingredients

2 sticks of rhubarb, chopped

2 plums, stones removed, and chopped

2 tablespoons water

## Method

1. Place the fruit in a small pan with the water. Bring to a simmer, stirring all the time, and cook until the fruit is soft.

**Finger food:** Plum slices



## DESSERT

10-12 months

## Mango fool

Dairy-free Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 75g.

## Ingredients

1/2 large mango, peeled, stoned and diced

200g unsweetened soya yoghurt

## Method

1. Roughly mash the mango.
2. Mix the mango with the yoghurt.

**Finger food:** Watermelon sticks



## DESSERT

10-12 months

Semolina made with soya milk,  
and prune purée

Dairy-free Egg-free Vegetarian Vegan

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

## Ingredients

50g semolina

350ml unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk

150g prunes canned in juice (about half of a 290g can),  
stones removed

## Method

1. Place the semolina and soya milk in a pan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until soft, stirring regularly.
2. To make the purée, roughly chop the prunes into the juice. Push the prune mixture through a sieve to make a purée.
3. Allow the semolina to cool and then serve it with the prune purée.

**Finger food:** Pineapple

## DESSERT

10-12 months

## Yoghurt with dates

Egg-free Gluten-free Vegetarian

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 50g.

**Ingredients**

160g full-fat plain yoghurt

6-8 ready-to-eat dates, finely chopped

**Method**

1. Sprinkle the yoghurt with the finely chopped dates

**Finger food:** Pear







**Additional  
information**



# Plates and bowls used in this resource

The photos below show the actual sizes of the plates and bowls used in the food photos in this resource. Most of the plates, bowls and cutlery were sourced from RICE ([www.rice.dk](http://www.rice.dk)), a Danish brand of melamine crockery that can be obtained from a number of retailers in the UK. (Note that melamine cannot be used in a microwave oven.) The baby cups were sourced from [www.babycup.co.uk](http://www.babycup.co.uk). The plastic beakers were from IKEA.

**Plate**

20cm





**Bowl**  
Width: 12cm



Depth: 4cm



**Finger food bowl**  
Width: 8cm



Depth: 3cm

# Good sources of vitamins and minerals

The table below shows a number of foods and drinks that are important sources of certain vitamins and minerals.

	Animal sources	Vegetable sources
<b>Vitamin A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>butter</li> <li>canned salmon</li> <li>cheese</li> <li>egg</li> <li>herrings</li> <li>kidney</li> <li>liver*</li> <li>full-fat milk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>apricots: fresh, dried or canned</li> <li>blackcurrants</li> <li>broad beans</li> <li>broccoli</li> <li>Brussels sprouts</li> <li>cabbage (dark)</li> <li>canteloupe melon</li> <li>carrots</li> <li>honeydew melon</li> <li>mango</li> <li>nectarine</li> <li>orange</li> <li>peach</li> <li>peas</li> <li>prunes</li> <li>red peppers</li> <li>runner beans</li> <li>spinach</li> <li>sweet potatoes</li> <li>sweetcorn</li> <li>tomatoes</li> <li>vegetable fat spread</li> <li>watercress</li> </ul>
<b>Vitamin C</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>apples</li> <li>blackberries</li> <li>blackcurrants</li> <li>broccoli</li> <li>Brussels sprouts</li> <li>cabbage</li> <li>cauliflower</li> <li>grapefruit</li> <li>green and red peppers (raw)</li> <li>green beans</li> <li>kiwi fruit</li> <li>mango</li> <li>nectarines</li> <li>orange (and orange juice)</li> <li>peaches</li> <li>peas</li> <li>potatoes</li> <li>raspberries</li> <li>satsumas</li> <li>spinach</li> <li>spring greens</li> <li>strawberries</li> <li>tomato</li> <li>watercress</li> </ul>



	Animal sources	Vegetable sources
<b>Vitamin D</b>	canned salmon chicken liver* egg yolk herrings liver* pilchards sardines tuna	fortified breakfast cereals vegetable fat spread
<b>Iron</b>	egg herrings kidney lamb liver* pilchards salmon sardines tuna	baked beans black-eyed peas blackcurrants broad beans broccoli chick peas dried apricots fortified breakfast cereals lentils raisins soya beans spinach spring greens tofu weet bisks white bread wholemeal bread/flour
<b>Zinc</b>	canned sardines canned tuna or pilchards cold cooked meat corned beef eggs kidney lean meat liver* poultry shrimps and prawns	beans and lentils brown or wholemeal bread wholegrain breakfast cereals, eg. puffed wheat, branflakes, weet bisks ground nuts plain popcorn sesame seeds tofu
<b>Calcium</b>	canned salmon cheese egg yolk fromage frais milk yoghurt	calcium-fortified unsweetened soya, almond and oat milks dried fruit green leafy vegetables ground almonds orange peas, beans, lentils sesame paste sesame seeds tofu white bread/flour

\* Liver, including liver pâté, is very rich in vitamin A which can be harmful in large amounts. It is recommended that these foods are given to children no more than once a week.

# Resources

## Useful organisations and publications

### Association of Breastfeeding Mothers

Helpline: 0300 330 5453

E: [info@abm.me.uk](mailto:info@abm.me.uk)

[www.abm.me.uk](http://www.abm.me.uk)

This charity offers extensive support to parents around breastfeeding and a range of factsheets and resources as well as providing counsellors for the National Breastfeeding Helpline. Information is available on a wide range of topics such as expressing breastmilk, breastfeeding twins, breastfeeding older children, and the roles of parents and grandparents. A list of over 1,200 support groups across England, Scotland and Wales can be accessed via the website.

### The Baby Café

[www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)

An NCT-supported charity that coordinates a network of breastfeeding drop-in centres and other services to support breastfeeding mothers.

### Best Beginnings

T: 020 7443 7895

E: [info@bestbeginnings.org.uk](mailto:info@bestbeginnings.org.uk)

[www.bestbeginnings.org.uk](http://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk)

Best Beginnings is a charity working to end child health inequalities in the UK. It offers a range of advice for parents and carers about feeding your baby, life with your baby and supporting your sick or premature baby. Their DVD *From bump to breastfeeding* follows real mothers' stories, shows parents how to get started with breastfeeding and provides practical answers to common problems. It can be viewed in seven languages including Urdu, Bengali and Somali. The website also has videos on: *Breastfeeding twins or more* and *Breastfeeding your sick or pre-term baby*, as well as a video on supporting premature babies called *Small wonders*.

The **Baby Buddy** app produced by Best Beginnings is free to download and provides a wealth of information on new parenting including information and films related to eating well.

### The Breastfeeding Network

Supporter line: 0300 100 0212

[www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)

The Breastfeeding Network is a UK charity that provides non-judgmental, independent, evidence-based, mother-centred breastfeeding information and support for breastfeeding women and their families. They run peer support projects across the country, as well as providing counsellors for the National Breastfeeding Helpline.

The Breastfeeding Network also runs the Drugs in Breastmilk Information Service.

### Bliss

T: 020 7378 1122

Email support: [hello@bliss.org.uk](mailto:hello@bliss.org.uk)

[www.bliss.org.uk](http://www.bliss.org.uk)

Provides information about feeding babies born too soon, too small, or too sick. See their website page *Breastfeeding*.

### Drugs in Breastmilk Information Service

Provides information on medication use when breastfeeding.

For information see:

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/detailed-information/drugs-in-breastmilk/>

For help with specific questions about medicines or treatments, message the Drugs in Breastmilk Information Service at:

<https://www.facebook.com/BfNDrugsinBreastmilkinformation/>

### First Steps Nutrition Trust

[www.firststepsnutrition.org](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org)

*Breastmilk and breastfeeding: A simple guide*

*Infant milks: A simple guide to infant formula, follow-on formula and other infant milks*

*Eating well for a healthy pregnancy: A practical guide*

*Eating well in pregnancy: A practical guide to support teenagers*

*Eating well for new mums*

*Eating well recipe book*

*Baby food in the UK: A review of commercially produced jars and pouches of baby foods marketed in the UK*

*Fruit and vegetable based purées in pouches for infants and young children*

*Processed dried fruit snacks for young children*

*Healthy Start and Best Start Foods: A practical guide*

*Eating well: Vegan infants and under-5s*

**Food Standards Agency**[www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

Provides a range of resources about food safety and hygiene. These are available to download at [www.food.gov.uk/food-safety](http://www.food.gov.uk/food-safety)

**Institute of Health Visiting**[www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)

The Institute of Health Visiting provides useful factsheets and training for health visitors, and factsheets for families.

**HENRY**[www.henry.org.uk](http://www.henry.org.uk)

This scheme (Health Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young) is an intervention to protect young children from obesity and runs behaviour change orientated family programmes.

**Lactation Consultants of Great Britain**[www.lcgb.org](http://www.lcgb.org)E: [info@lcgb.org](mailto:info@lcgb.org)

The association for those with the qualification of the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). It specialises in promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding and lactation issues. It is an affiliate member of ILCA (International Lactation Consultant Association).

**La Leche League GB**

Helpline: 0345 120 2918

[www.laleche.org.uk](http://www.laleche.org.uk)

A support network that offers information and encouragement, mainly through mother-to-mother support, to all women who want to breastfeed their babies. It holds regular meetings, open to mothers, all over the UK.

There is also an excellent selection of frequently asked questions available at:

[www.llli.org/breastfeeding-info/](http://www.llli.org/breastfeeding-info/)**Maternity Action**[www.maternityaction.org.uk](http://www.maternityaction.org.uk)

Maternity Action is committed to ending inequality and improving the health and well-being of pregnant women, partners and young children from conception through to the child's early years. They also support the rights of women to breastfeed in the workplace.

**Multiple Births Foundation**

T: 020 3313 3519

[www.multiplebirths.org.uk](http://www.multiplebirths.org.uk)

The Multiple Births Foundation supports multiple-birth families. They have produced free feeding guidelines for parents and carers. Their booklet *Feeding twins, triplets and more* is available at <https://www.multiplebirths.org.uk/assets/downloads/feeding-twins-triplets-and-more-a-booklet-for-parents.pdf>

**National Breastfeeding Helpline**

T: 0300 100 0212 (available in English, Polish and Welsh)

This helpline is run in collaboration with volunteers from the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers and the Breastfeeding Network and is funded by the Department of Health and Social Care.

**NCT**

T: 0844 243 6000

Helpline: 0300 330 0700

E: [enquiries@nct.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nct.co.uk)[www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)

A national parenting charity that offers support and information on all aspects of feeding including breastfeeding, mixed and formula feeding and introducing solid foods, via courses, the website, a helpline and local drop-ins. For information targeted at babies from 0-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-9 months, 9-12 months, 12-18 months, and 18-24 months, see [www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler](http://www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler)

See also the following web pages:

*How do I stop breastfeeding?*<https://www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler/feeding/practical-tips/how-do-i-stop-breastfeeding>*My baby won't stop crying (how to identify and deal with colic)*[www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler/crying/my-baby-wont-stop-crying-how-identify-and-deal-colic](http://www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler/crying/my-baby-wont-stop-crying-how-identify-and-deal-colic)*How can dads and partners support breastfeeding?*[www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler/feeding/tips-for-dads-and-partners/how-can-dads-and-partners-support-breastfeeding](http://www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler/feeding/tips-for-dads-and-partners/how-can-dads-and-partners-support-breastfeeding)**NHS**[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

The NHS website has information on all aspects of breastfeeding at

[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby)

**NHS Health Scotland/Scottish Government**[www.parentclub.scot](http://www.parentclub.scot)

Information to support parents and professionals with infant feeding.

*Off to a good start: All you need to know about breastfeeding your baby*

[www.healthscotland.com/documents/120.aspx](http://www.healthscotland.com/documents/120.aspx)

*Ready, Steady, Baby*

[www.readysteadybaby.org.uk](http://www.readysteadybaby.org.uk)

A website covering the time from deciding to have a baby, through pregnancy and birth, and up until baby is 12 months.

**Public Health Agency (Northern Ireland)**<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/>

The following publications are available for download:

*Off to a good start: All you need to know about breastfeeding your baby*

*What dads should know about breastfeeding*

*Weaning made easy: Moving from milk to family meals* (Also available in Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese and Russian.)

**Public Health Wales**

*Bump, Baby & Beyond* (in English)

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/bump-baby-and-beyond/>

A book that provides parents with support from the early stages of pregnancy, through to the early days with your baby and into the toddler years.

Bilingual health information (in English and Welsh) can be accessed at:

[www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/44944](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/44944)**Solihull Approach**[www.solihullapproachparenting.com](http://www.solihullapproachparenting.com)

Parenting courses for health professionals and families.

**Start4life**[www.nhs.uk/start4life](http://www.nhs.uk/start4life)

Start4life runs a chatbot to provide advice on breastfeeding, information on feeding babies for parents, partners and other family members, as well as information on first foods.

**Sustain**[www.sustainweb.org](http://www.sustainweb.org)

Sustain produces *The Sustain guide to good food: How to help make our food and farming system fit for the future*.

**Twins Trust**[www.twinstrust.org](http://www.twinstrust.org)

E: [enquiries@twinstrust.org](mailto:enquiries@twinstrust.org)

Twins Trust has replaced TAMBA. They provide information on breastfeeding and mixed feeding multiple babies.

**Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative**

T: 020 7375 6144

E: [bfi@unicef.org.uk](mailto:bfi@unicef.org.uk)

[www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/)

The Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative website contains useful information and advice on all aspects of breastfeeding. It also provides free access to research on infant feeding including on topics such as breastfeeding and breast cancer; breastfeeding and tongue tie; and breastfeeding and allergy. See [www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/news-and-research/baby-friendly-research/](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/news-and-research/baby-friendly-research/)

*Off to the best start*

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/breastfeeding-resources/off-to-the-best-start/>

A downloadable booklet produced in collaboration with the Government's Start4Life campaign. It provides information about all aspects of breastfeeding, including for multiple births.

*Breastfeeding at study or work – information for employees and employers*

[www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/breastfeeding-resources/breastfeeding-at-study-or-work/](http://www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/breastfeeding-resources/breastfeeding-at-study-or-work/)**Vegetarian Society**

T: 0161 925 2000

[www.vegsoc.org](http://www.vegsoc.org)

The Vegetarian Society is a UK educational and campaigning charity. Their website provides information on vegetarian diets, as well as vegetarian recipes.

**The Vegan Society**[www.vegansociety.com](http://www.vegansociety.com)

T: 0121 523 1730



## Who to ask for advice

In the UK, registered dietitians (RD) and registered nutritionists (public health) are the professionals qualified to provide advice and training on good nutrition in public settings. Anyone can call themselves a nutritionist in the UK, and those registered with organisations other than the Health Professions Council (for dietitians) or the Association for Nutrition (for registered nutritionists) are unlikely to have appropriate public health nutrition knowledge.

Health visitors are likely to be the health professional group providing most families with advice around infant feeding, and good information on nutrition for health visitors can be found through the Institute of Health Visiting (see [www.ihv.org.uk](http://www.ihv.org.uk)).

We hope that all those working to support families around good nutrition will ensure that any information they use is accurate, up-to-date and compatible with Unicef UK Baby Friendly guidelines.



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