

## WEANING TO SOLIDS FOR YOUR BABY

# When is my baby ready to start solids?



Babies are ready to start solids at close to 6 months of age when the following milestones are reached.

- Able to sit well with support on a feeding chair or on a caregiver's lap
- Has good head and neck control and is able to hold head up steadily
- Grabs objects within reach and mouths them
- Shows interest in food such as displaying mouthing or leaning in to ask for food

Some babies at 4-6 months might be able to start solids earlier on the advice of your paediatrician if there are concerns about milk intake or weight gain.

## How do I start solids?

### Methods

- Spoon feeding with purees
- Baby-led weaning with finger foods
- Or a combination of both

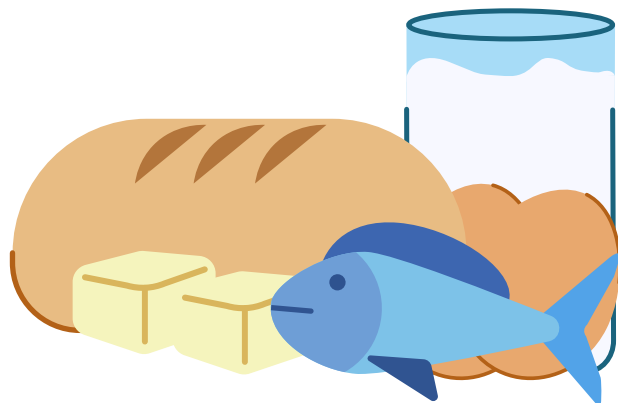
### Preparing for solids:

- Get a high chair: Upright seat with a harness, adjustable footstep so babies can rest their feet on it, and removable tray so baby can also eat at the table with you. (For alternatives, such as feeding while seated on a caregiver's lap, do read <https://solidstarts.com/the-ultimate-guide-to-high-chairs-for-babies/>)
- Open cups
- Plates and bowls with a rim (and suction is good to consider)
- Steamer and blender for convenience if considering purees



## Be more cautious when starting on allergenic foods such as:

- Milk (if not already on formula, in the form of yoghurt, cheese)
- Soy (Tofu)
- Egg (Start as hard boiled egg. Offer the yolk first which is less allergenic before the white.)
- Wheat (cereals, bread, pastas)
- Fish
- Shellfish
- Peanut and other tree nuts (serve as diluted thinned nut butters or crushed nuts).



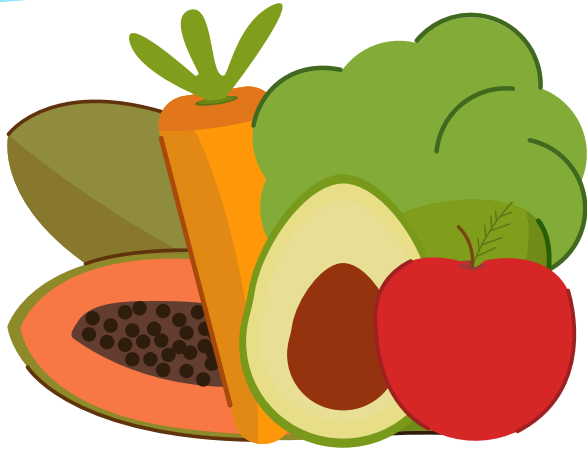
## Safety to watch for food reactions

- Start one new food over 4 days consecutively before moving on or adding another new food.
- This is because most food reactions occur after several days of exposure.
- Stop the food and consult your doctor if you see any acute reactions such as patchy red rashes, hives, swelling or vomiting.
- Seek urgent medical attention if there are any severe reactions such as breathlessness, lethargy, persistent vomiting or worsening swelling or rashes.



It is currently advised to gradually expose babies to allergenic foods by 6-12 months of age and maintain these foods in the diets to reduce the risk of allergies.

## First food guides



These are examples of common first foods for babies:

- Fruits: Apple, Pear, Peach, Banana, Avocado, Papaya
- Vegetables: Carrots, Pumpkin, Sweet Potato, Green peas, Spinach, String Beans, Cauliflower, Broccoli
- Meats: White fish (Eg. Threadfin, Codfish), Salmon, Chicken, Liver, Ground beef
- Grains: Rice, Wheat, Oat, Millet, Quinoa



Focus on iron rich solids daily. (Eg. beans, lentils, red meats, liver, nuts (as nut butters or crushed nuts!), salmon or sardines. If you are considering baby-led weaning [www.solidstart.com](http://www.solidstart.com) First Foods Database is a useful resource to help you prepare suitable foods for your baby.

### How much food do I offer my baby?

- 1 meal per day when first weaning to solids
- Increase to 2 meals a day after 1-2 months of starting on solids
- Move to 3 meals a day close to 12 months of age

Offer 1 small sized meal portion per meal. It is not worrying if your baby rejects solids. Some babies accept foods only after 20-30 instances of offering it! A general meal-sized portion for purees might be about 3-4 tablespoonfuls.