

Starting Solids: Top 10 FAQ

1. SHOULD I CHOOSE ORGANIC?

Buying organic is a personal choice. At times, it is more costly with limited availability.

2. WHEN DO I OFFER POTENTIALLY ALLERGENIC FOODS?

Research shows that introducing babies to potentially allergenic foods early and often can help reduce the risk of developing food allergies. Offer small amounts of one potential allergen at a time and monitor for reactions for about 3 days before offering the next. Once each potential allergen is tolerated, they no longer need to be offered separately.

3. SHOULD I GIVE MY BABY WATER?

Breastmilk and formula are both about 85% water, so your baby gets plenty of fluids already. However, it is important to get your baby used to the taste of water. Limit water to about 2-3 oz total per day, in addition to breast-milk and formula.

4. WHEN DO I INTRODUCE A SIPPY CUP?

When your child turns 6 months, and you embark upon solid foods, it may be a good idea to start an alternate method of drinking as well. Experiment with a soft spout or open cup to get your baby accustomed to drinking from something other than a bottle.

5. WHEN DO I START PICK-UP FOODS?

At the 9 month mark, your baby may start grabbing for the spoon or bowl. This is a great time to try introducing foods on their tray that are small enough that your baby won't choke, but big enough to pick up easily. Keep in mind—the smaller the food, the more difficult it may be to pick up, which may create frustration. Try thawed frozen veggies such as peas, carrots, and corn, or consider soft foods such as diced avocado, butternut squash, or mango.

6. HOW DO I KNOW WHEN MY BABY IS FULL?

Signs of fullness at mealtimes include: clamping his or her mouth shut, turning his or her head away from the spoon, or simple disinterest. It is important to read their signals, and end the meal when they show these signs.

7. DO I HAVE TO PURCHASE ANY SPECIAL EQUIPMENT TO PREPARE BABY FOOD?

The baby food stage is short, and purees get pretty boring pretty quickly. Rather than purchasing multiple tools, try to use the kitchen essentials you have on hand like a steamer basket, food processor or blender, and even a potato masher. Many of these are great tools that help prep both baby and adult food!

8. HOW DO I STORE MY HOMEMADE BABY FOODS?

When prepping a batch of purees, it is best to freeze your foods into ready to use portions. Consider using ice cube trays to store cooked food into 1 oz portions. Freeze and store in zip-tight bags.

9. ARE THERE ANY OFF-LIMITS FOODS FOR MY BABY?

The only food off-limits for babies is honey, which can contain spores of bacteria and cause your baby to become ill. Otherwise, there are no rules in infant feeding! Think beyond the jar! Rather than looking to your store shelves to learn what is marketed to babies, aim to expose your baby to multiple flavors and textures during your baby's first year.

10. WHAT DO I DO IF MY BABY DOESN'T LIKE A FOOD?

Try, try, and try again! Research shows it takes about 6-15 exposures to a new food for your baby to prefer it. Sometimes, it may take even more! Most importantly, don't give up!