

## Starting Solids

At approximately 6 months your infant will start solid foods. We will discuss this at your 4 month check-up.

Here are some signs that your infant is ready to start solids:

- He has overcome the “tongue-thrust” reflex which causes your infant to push food and the spoon out of his mouth with his tongue
- He holds his head up well
- He grabs things and puts them in his mouth
- He watches you eat

## Feeding Tips

### Starting with cereals:

Cereals:

- Rice
- Barley
- Oatmeal
- Mixed grains
- Use a variety

Start with one tablespoon of cereal. Make the cereal loose with breast milk or formula and feed him with a small spoon. Your baby needs to learn to eat, so initially don't feed him when he's very hungry or he will become frustrated. After your child becomes familiar with the mechanics of feeding you can make the cereal thicker and give him more-up to 4 tablespoons ( $\frac{1}{4}$  cup) per serving. These cereals are an excellent source of iron for your infant. If you prefer not to use cereal, please introduce meats or iron rich vegetables (spinach) early as your baby needs a source of iron in his diet after 6 months of age.

Sometimes rice cereal can constipate your baby. If this happens, you can switch to barley or oatmeal. You can also add prunes or pears to the cereal as well.

### Fruits, Vegetables, Protein:

After your baby has had cereals and is comfortable with eating, you can add fruits and vegetables one at a time leaving 3-5 days between new foods. Start with the single “stage 1” foods. To make your own, steam vegetables or stew fruits until soft, then puree. Individual portions can be frozen in an ice cube tray and “popped out” later to reheat.

Try to start with vegetables and then add fruits and pureed meats. There is protein in breast milk and formula. Your baby does not need juice in his diet. There is a lot of unnecessary sugar

in juice, so we do not normally recommend it unless there are constipation issues. For an extra drink, water (up to 4 oz. per day) is fine.

Your goal by 6 to 9 months of age is 3 meals per day, 2 snacks per day and 24 oz. formula or breast milk (nursing on demand) per day.

**Foods to avoid in the first year if there are food allergies in the family or your child has eczema:**

- Citrus
- Egg whites
- Strawberries
- Wheat
- Nuts
- Seafood

**Foods to avoid for all children under 18 months:**

- Honey can cause infant Botulism
- Small round foods that your child can choke on: Grapes (unless peeled and quartered, hot dogs, etc....)

**Websites with feeding tips:**

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

[www.starthealthystayhealthy.com](http://www.starthealthystayhealthy.com)