

# Getting Started With Solid Foods

You know your baby is ready for solid food when he:

- Holds his head up without help
- Reaches for the spoon and shows interest in your food
- Can suck food off a spoon without gagging or pushing the food back out

You can see if your baby is ready by mixing infant rice cereal with breast milk or formula so that it is soupy. Place a small amount on baby's tongue with a baby spoon. Give this several tries. If food comes right back out or baby has difficulty swallowing, you should wait a week or two before trying again. Most babies are developmentally ready to start solid foods sometime between four and six months.

## Start with:

1-2 tablespoons iron fortified dry rice cereal mixed with breast milk or formula until soupy. Try this once a day (evening seems to be the favorite time for most families). If she eats everything, try a second meal. Thicken the cereal as the baby grows and becomes comfortable with feeding.

Babies have likes and dislikes. It takes time to get used to new tastes and textures. Don't worry if your baby refuses a particular food. Try it again in a few days.

## Adding foods:

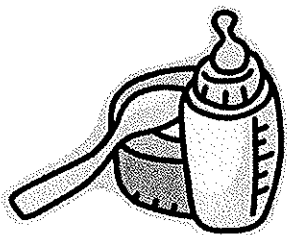
When baby is eating cereal at breakfast and dinner, begin feeding different foods. Start with one-third of a 4 oz. jar and gradually increase to the whole jar. Pour some food into a bowl and feed from the bowl.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator. If you've dipped the spoon directly in the jar of baby food, throw the rest out if you haven't used it within a day.

Introduce one new food every 3-4 days. If there is a problem, you can tell which food may have caused it.

Wait to introduce pureed meats until eight months of age.

A typical menu after introducing fruits and vegetables may look like this:



7:00 am	breast milk or formula
8:30 am	cereal and fruit (1/2 -1 jar)
11:30 am	vegetable, breast milk or formula
3:00 pm	breast milk or formula
5:00 pm	cereal and fruit, vegetable
6:30 pm	breast milk or formula
10:30 pm	breast milk or formula