



# Fun **First** Foods

An easy guide to introducing solid foods

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## **UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative**

UNICEF is the world's leading children's charity. The Baby Friendly Initiative provides training and assessment for hospitals and community health services to enable them to give breastfeeding mothers the help and support they need to breastfeed successfully. Visit [www.babyfriendly.org.uk](http://www.babyfriendly.org.uk)

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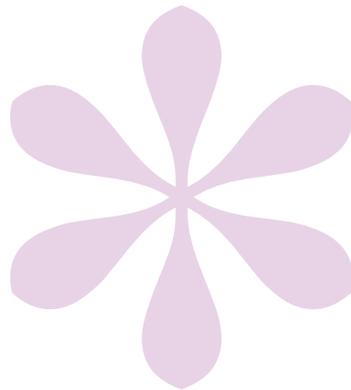
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# Contents

How this booklet will help you	2
What to eat?	6
Getting started	10
Moving on	14
Mini meals	18
What can my baby drink?	22
Weaning before six months	26
Recipes	30





# How this booklet will help you

As a parent, you want the best start for your baby. What your baby eats and drinks is important for her health now and in the future.

The information in this booklet may be quite different from what you have read before, or from what your friends and family may tell you. New research is always being carried out into feeding babies and the information and advice in this leaflet is based on the most recent findings. It will help you ensure that your baby is getting the best possible start.

## What is weaning?

Weaning means introducing a variety of foods gradually to your baby alongside her usual milk until she is eating the same healthy foods as the rest of the family.

For the sake of consistency we have used 'she' or 'her' throughout the booklet.



## **When is the best time to introduce solid foods?**

Health experts now recommend that babies should start eating solid foods from around the age of six months. For the first six months, all the nourishment your baby needs comes from breast milk (or infant formula), but after six months she will need more nutrients than milk alone can provide, for example, iron. You should aim to gradually increase the variety and amount of solid foods so that, by 12 months, food rather than milk is the main part of her diet. This will help your baby to grow and develop properly.

## **What are the advantages of weaning at six months?**

Before six months your baby's digestive system and kidneys are still developing. Weaning too soon may increase the risk of asthma, eczema, digestive problems, allergies, and obesity in later life. Weaning is also easier at six months because there is no need to puree food.



## **What about bigger babies – won't they need solid food earlier?**

It doesn't really matter what weight your baby was at birth – her digestive system and kidneys will still develop at the same rate as a smaller baby. There's no need to introduce solid food earlier just because she weighs more. If she seems particularly hungry at any time, she may be having a growth spurt and extra breastfeeding or infant formula will be enough to meet her needs. If you have any concerns, discuss them with your health visitor/public health nurse. If she's not sleeping through the night when she had been previously, then there's no evidence to suggest that weaning earlier will help.

## **My older sister weaned her children at four months and they're fine – why can't I?**

Weaning from four months was the advice given for a number of years, but the new guidance of six months is based on more recent research and is supported by the World Health Organization and the Scottish Government. You may not see an immediate difference in your baby's health compared to other babies that are weaned earlier, but you can be confident that you are giving your baby the best chance to have good health throughout her life.

If you choose to wean at any time before six months, there are a number of foods which should be avoided. Please see page 26 for a list of these foods. You should never wean before four months (17 weeks).

## Premature babies

If your baby was born prematurely, ask your paediatrician, health visitor/public health nurse or paediatric dietitian for advice about what is best for your baby.

## How do I know when my baby is ready to start solid foods?

Every baby is different but there are some signs that can suggest your baby is ready to move on to solid foods. These are:

- \* she can sit up
- \* her eye and hand coordination has developed so that she can reach out and grab things accurately
- \* she takes things into her mouth and chews them rather than automatically pushing them out.

If your baby is looked after by someone else during the day, e.g. a grandparent, childminder or nursery, this should not affect how you wean your baby. You should discuss your feeding routine with them to ensure they do the same thing as you.



# What to eat?

Weaning is a time for learning about foods.

Your baby will learn that:

- \* foods come in different colours, flavours and textures
- \* some foods are eaten from a spoon, while other foods can be held and eaten with her hands
- \* some drinks come from a cup.

For a healthy diet, babies should be encouraged to eat a variety of foods from each of the following four food groups:

## **Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods**

These foods are important sources of energy, vitamins and minerals and should be a major part of your baby's diet. This group also includes low-sugar breakfast cereals, sweet potatoes, porridge, noodles, couscous, yams, plantains and chapattis.



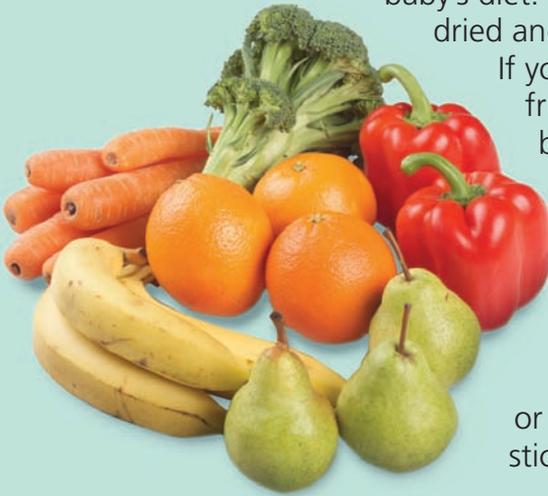


## Fruits and vegetables

These are a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals essential for your baby's health. They should also be a major part of your baby's diet. You can use fresh, tinned, dried and frozen fruit, and vegetables.

If you buy tinned fruit, choose fruit in natural juice as this is better for your baby's teeth. If you buy tinned vegetables, buy those that don't have any added salt.

Fruits and vegetables are ideal first foods. Try mashing a banana or a cooked carrot, or offer sliced pear or melon sticks as finger foods.



To encourage your baby to eat fruits and vegetables, eat them yourself. A baby loves to copy her parents.

## Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein



These foods are important for your baby's growth and development and include lean red meat, white fish, oily fish (for example, mackerel, salmon and tinned sardines), chicken, eggs and pulses (beans, peas and lentils, etc.).

Quorn™ and tofu are also good sources of protein.

## Milk and dairy foods

These foods contain calcium which is needed for strong bones and teeth. They also provide energy, protein, vitamins and minerals for your baby. Dairy foods are made from milk, e.g. cheese and yoghurt. Make sure you use full-fat dairy products such as full-fat plain yoghurt, full-fat fromage frais and full-fat cow's milk when cooking, e.g., cheese sauce, custard, rice pudding and semolina.



Babies up to the age of two have high energy needs compared to older children and adults, and so need more fat in their diet. After that they can gradually move to a lower-fat diet – the same as the rest of the family. You can use vegetable oils such as olive or sunflower oil for cooking, and vegetable margarine (e.g. sunflower) on bread or toast fingers.

## Food safety

- \* Wash your hands before preparing your baby's food and wash your baby's hands before she eats.
- \* Make sure the area where the food will be prepared is clean.
- \* Carefully wash all bowls, spoons, feeding cups and any containers used in hot soapy water. This is enough, there is no need to sterilise them.
- \* Spoon out and heat only the amount of food you need.
- \* Throw away any uneaten or left-over heated food.
- \* Make sure you stir and test any heated food before giving it to your baby.
- \* Food stored in a fridge should be eaten within two days.
- \* Frozen food should be thoroughly defrosted before reheating.
- \* Reheated food should be heated until it is piping hot all the way through and then cooled before offering it to your baby.





# Getting started



## How to start

Choose a time of day when you and your baby are relaxed. If your baby is really hungry it is best to give her some of her milk feed first. There is no right way, just the way that suits you and your baby. After a couple of weeks you will find a pattern that suits you both. You will need a bib for your baby, a soft spoon and a bowl (these should be clean but do not need to be sterilised).

## What to expect

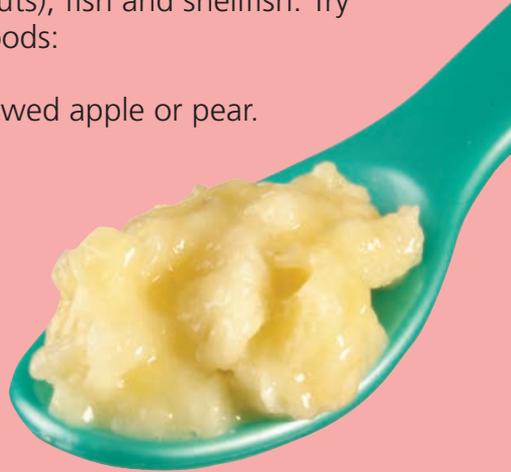
Eating is fun and your baby will learn this too! Try not to worry too much about mess. Your baby may spit food out the first couple of times – this is quite normal, just wait and try another day. Some babies take to it quickly, some take longer. Some are more choosy and you may need to offer a new food several times before it is accepted. Many babies are slow to eat at the beginning; be patient and let her take it at her own pace.

**Remember:** Your baby can pick up how you are feeling, so if you are nervous, she may be too.

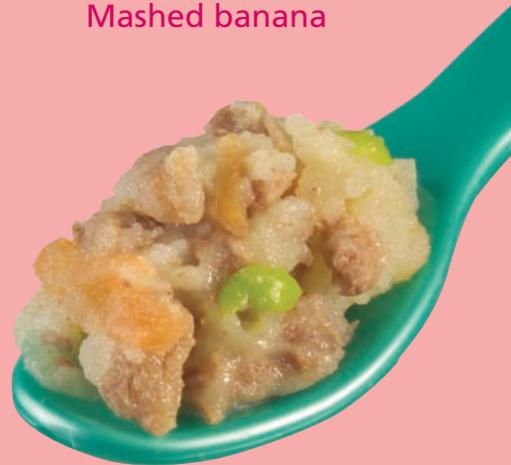
## First foods

Foods that commonly cause allergies should be introduced one at a time so you can spot any reaction. These foods are: cow's milk, eggs, wheat, seeds, nuts (see page 29 for additional information about introducing peanuts), fish and shellfish. Try the following suggestions for first foods:

- \* Mashed fruit such as banana, stewed apple or pear.
- \* Mashed cooked vegetables such as potato, carrot, parsnip, turnip or cauliflower.
- \* Small pieces of soft fruit or cooked vegetables.
- \* Toast, bread, pitta bread or chapatti, rice cake or breadstick.
- \* Cheese, slices of hard boiled egg or chunks of cooked fish (be careful to remove all bones) which she can pick up.
- \* Baby rice or other cereal mixed with her usual milk (expressed breast milk or formula) – always in a bowl, not in her bottle.
- \* Use mashed-up healthy family foods where possible.



Mashed banana



Shepherd's pie with special mash



## How often and how much?

- \* Start with a few teaspoons of well-mashed food at one meal a day.
- \* Gradually increase the amount.
- \* Be guided by your baby's appetite, this may be a few teaspoons or a quarter of a cup.
- \* Allow your baby to feed herself, using her fingers as soon as she shows interest.
- \* Offer her a range of foods and textures.
- \* Don't force her to take the food – if she doesn't seem to want it, try again later.
- \* Don't forget that milk is still the most important part of her diet and at first she will continue to drink the same amount of breast milk or infant formula.

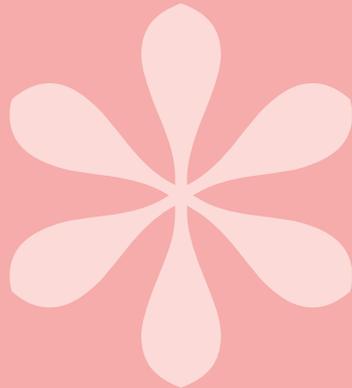


Do not add sugar or salt to foods for your baby (salt can overload a young baby's kidneys and sugar can harm your baby's teeth). If your baby is sharing family foods, the whole family will benefit from eating less salt and sugar too.

Do not put any foods in your baby's bottle.



When starting solids, get your baby comfortable sitting up and facing straight forward – a highchair will ensure she is well-supported and therefore less likely to choke. She will also be able to use her fingers to pick up her food more easily.





# Moving on



Once your baby is used to eating a few foods, it's time to move on to:

- \* More meals – moving from food at one meal a day to food at two and three meals a day.
- \* More foods – giving her food from each of the food groups (see page 6). You can use many of the foods you have cooked for the rest of the family, as long as they have not had salt or sugar added.
- \* More texture – from mashed to lumps and from lumps to minced feeds, together with finger foods. Try mixing a new food with a familiar one, e.g. add cooked lentils to mashed carrot or parsnip.
- \* More nutrients – as your baby's need for iron and other important nutrients increases.
- \* More food experiences – drinking from a cup and feeding herself with finger foods.

This process should be done at your baby's own pace.



## More meals

When your baby seems ready, progress from offering solid food once a day to two and three times a day. She should still have her usual amount of milk throughout the day. In addition, you may wish to offer her tap water in a cup with meals.

Remember that all babies are different. Your baby will let you know how much she wants to eat and this may vary from day to day. For some, this is what a typical day's meals may look like:

Breakfast	Low-sugar cereal (e.g. wheat biscuits, porridge, cornflakes) with your baby's usual milk or full-fat cow's milk Fruit – soft fruit pieces
Lunch	Minced or mashed food and finger foods, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• scrambled eggs or baked beans with toast slices</li><li>• <b>or</b> homemade carrot soup with bread fingers</li><li>• <b>or</b> pasta with tomato and vegetable sauce</li><li>• <b>and/or</b> chopped/mashed banana and full-fat plain yoghurt</li></ul>
Dinner	Minced or mashed food and finger foods, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• tuna and pasta (in oil or water) with sweetcorn</li><li>• <b>or</b> mashed potato with cheese and broccoli</li><li>• <b>or</b> minced meat/lentils with mashed potatoes and carrots</li><li>• <b>and/or</b> mashed canned apricots in juice with full-fat plain yoghurt</li></ul>



As the amount of food she eats increases, she will need less of her usual milk. However, you should still continue to breastfeed for as long as you wish or she should drink about 500–600 mls of infant formula a day until she is 12 months old.

## More texture

Don't be frightened of giving your baby food with lumps. It is important for her to learn that food comes in different textures and these foods will help encourage her to chew. Some babies dislike lumps but are happy to eat finger foods such as cooked carrot sticks, or small pieces of crust or toast.

Vitamins: ask your health visitor/public health nurse about vitamins for you and your baby. It is recommended that babies and young children have vitamin drops (A, C and D) up to the age of five. If you qualify for Healthy Start you can receive these vitamin drops free of charge.



## Iron

Iron is essential for your baby's development. Breast milk contains iron but after around six months there is not enough for your baby's needs. Give iron-rich foods regularly such as:

- \* Red meat, canned fish, or well-cooked eggs. Use minced meat for dishes such as shepherd's pie (see recipe section). Liver contains lots of iron but it should only be eaten a maximum of once a week.
- \* Low-sugar breakfast cereals with added iron. Wholemeal bread, lentils, beans and green vegetables contain some iron too.

Never leave your baby alone while eating in case she chokes.



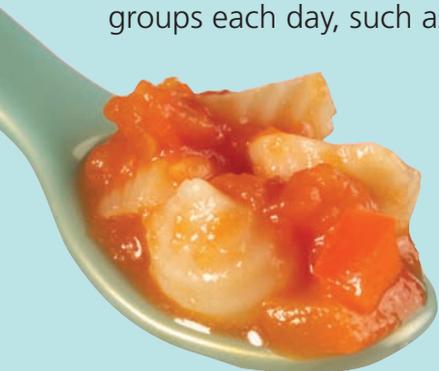
Avoid foods and drinks that fill your baby up with sugar or fat, or are high in salt and/or have few vitamins and minerals, e.g. sweetened drinks and fizzy drinks, fruit squashes, fruit drinks, chocolate, sweets, crisps and corn snacks, deep fried foods, chocolate coated biscuits, pastries, tea and coffee.





# Mini meals

As your baby approaches her first birthday you can expect her to be eating a wide range of different foods from all the food groups each day, such as:



Simple tomato and vegetable sauce

- \* 3–4 servings of fruit and vegetables
- \* 3–4 servings of starchy food each day, e.g. potatoes, bread, rice
- \* 2 servings of protein, e.g. meat, fish, eggs, pulses
- \* 2–3 servings of dairy products, e.g. milky pudding, yoghurt, cheese.

As your baby gets older she may enjoy a healthy snack between meals, such as:



- \* small sandwiches filled with cold meat or fish
- \* cooled, filled cooked pasta such as tortellini
- \* cucumber sticks or fruit slices
- \* small breadsticks with a cheesy dip (mix 1 tablespoon of finely grated cheese with 1–2 tablespoons of full-fat plain yoghurt).

## Joining in with the family

Eating with your baby makes her feel more included and helps her develop social skills and encourages her to get into good habits from a young age. She may be slower and make a mess but try to be patient.

- \* Try to organise mealtimes for the same time every day – she will then know what to expect and is more likely to eat happily.
- \* Cook something all the family can eat.
- \* Don't add any salt or sugar while cooking – you will all benefit from having less salt and sugar.
- \* Avoid using ready-made meals and food products which have high salt and sugar content.
- \* Encourage her to feed herself.
- \* Smile and talk to your baby.



If you do want to offer foods high in sugar these should be kept to a minimum and should be offered as part of a main meal not as a snack between meals. Try not to use a sweet food as a reward for eating a savoury one.

## Using ready-made baby foods

It can sometimes be convenient to use jars or packets of baby food but don't let them replace home-made foods altogether. Home-made foods can offer your baby more variety in texture and will encourage her to accept lumps and more solid foods. You could also cook bigger quantities than you need and freeze some in small tubs.

If you buy baby foods:

- \* Choose foods where the label says they do not contain added sugars. Also look out for any of the following words on the label, all of which are forms of sugar: honey, sucrose, glucose, maltose, dextrose, fructose, hydrolysed starch, corn or maize syrup, molasses, raw/brown sugar, treacle, and concentrated fruit juice.
- \* Make sure the foods are within their use-by date and that the seal has not been broken.
- \* Only heat up the amount you need and throw away any food your baby doesn't eat.
- \* Manufactured baby foods do not contain any added salt. Don't add any salt to home-made foods.
- \* Bought baby foods tend to be much more expensive than making your own food.
- \* Some baby foods may say 'suitable from four months' on the label but health experts agree that around six months is the safest age to start to introduce solids.

## Are there any foods I shouldn't give?

- \* Honey, salt and sugar should be avoided until 12 months of age.
- \* Whole peanuts should be avoided until five years of age as there is a risk of choking (finely chopped peanuts are okay – see page 29 for further advice on peanuts).

**How can I get my baby to try new foods?** Try, try and try again is the best way of getting babies and children to eat foods with a new flavour. The more they try new foods and the more they see the rest of the family eating it, the more likely they are to eat it!





# What can my baby drink?

## Milk

- \* Breastfeeding will benefit you and your baby for as long as you choose to continue. Breast milk changes as your baby grows to adapt to her needs.
- \* If you are using infant formula, continue using first stage (whey-based) formula until your baby is 12 months old.
- \* Cow's milk (full-fat and pasteurised milk only) is suitable as a main drink after 12 months. After six months you can also use full-fat cow's milk for mixing in cereal or for cooking, e.g. in sauces and puddings, and you can also give products made from full-fat cow's milk, e.g. yoghurt and fromage frais. Semi-skimmed milk is not suitable for babies and young children under the age of two.
- \* Follow-on formula which is intended for babies over six months is not recommended or needed.

Natural fresh fruit juices are a good source of vitamin C but contain naturally present sugars which can cause tooth decay. They are also acidic. Acidic drinks may erode your baby's teeth. Fruit juices should therefore be given in small amounts (no more than half a cup), be unsweetened and diluted (one-part juice to one-part water), and given at meal times only in a free-flow cup, not a feeding bottle.

Water is the best drink to give in addition to milk and this is the only drink which is safe for teeth if given between meals. Use tap water as mineral, sweetened, flavoured or carbonated water can be too high in salt and minerals for babies. For babies under six months of age, tap water should be boiled and cooled first.

## Cups

From six months start to offer tap water or her usual formula milk in a cup, helping her until she can hold it herself. For breastfed babies you should continue to breastfeed as normal, offering tap water in a cup with meals if you feel she needs it.

Learning to drink from a cup can be messy but she needs to learn to sip, not suck. If the cup has a lid, make sure the water can drip out if turned upside down; this is known as a free-flow cup. Free-flow cups are given out as part of the Childsmile Programme. Non-spill (valve) cups encourage your baby to suck rather than sip and should be avoided. The sucking motion can indirectly lead to speech problems.

Drinks taken from a bottle are more likely to lead to dental problems because the fluid tends to stay in the mouth longer than when sipping from a cup. Aim to have her drinking only from a cup by her first birthday. Avoid giving her sweetened or acidic drinks (see page 24 – Drinks to avoid) which will harm her teeth.



## Drinks to avoid

- \* Soya-based infant formula should only be used on the advice of your GP or health visitor/public health nurse. This is because of possible long-term side effects of soya-based formula and its sugar content. The sugars in soya milk can cause tooth decay, making it important for babies to drink from a fast-flow teat or a cup. Damage can be kept to a minimum if soya drinks are given at meal times only. Soya formula is not suitable as a bedtime drink. Other soya-based drinks should be avoided until your baby is 12 months old.
- \* Goat's or sheep's milk are unsuitable for babies under 12 months, and after 12 months must be pasteurised.
- \* Sugary, diet or no added sugar fruit squashes and fizzy drinks are not suitable for babies or toddlers. They have few nutrients and can fill your baby up, meaning that she doesn't eat well. They are also damaging to teeth.
- \* Flavoured milks contain added sugar and are not suitable for young children.
- \* Baby fruit and herbal drinks are not suitable as they are usually sweetened.
- \* Tea and coffee contain substances which prevent your baby absorbing some nutrients from food, act as stimulants, and have no nutritional value themselves. Don't give your baby tea or coffee even if diluted.



**Remember:** If your baby is well-established on solids and wants a drink during the night, only give her plain tap water or breast milk.

**Caring for her teeth:** It is important that you clean your baby's teeth from as soon as the first tooth appears. Use a soft toothbrush with a small head and a smear of at least 1,000 parts per million (ppm) fluoride toothpaste for children under two, and a small pea-sized amount for children aged two years and above.





# Weaning before six months

Weaning before six months is not recommended. However, if you do start to give solids before six months, the following foods should be avoided:

- \* wheat (e.g. some breakfast cereals, bread)
- \* fish and shellfish
- \* cow's milk
- \* eggs
- \* liver
- \* peanuts or foods containing peanuts such as peanut butter
- \* soft and unpasteurised cheeses
- \* nuts and seeds.



If you decide to wean your baby before six months, you will need to puree foods to a smooth, thin consistency. Suitable foods are plain baby rice mixed with her usual milk and served in a bowl never in a bottle, pureed fruit such as apple, pear or banana, or pureed vegetables such as potato, carrot or parsnip. All equipment for spoon feeding must be sterilised until she is six months old. Gradually increase spoon feeds to two to three times a day. The amount you give should be guided by your baby's appetite. It is important to move from pureed on to mashed and more lumpy foods as your baby gets used to taking foods from a spoon.

Babies should never be weaned before four months (17 weeks).



## Allergies

Babies are more likely to develop allergies if there is a family history of eczema, asthma or hay fever. For these families, exclusive breastfeeding is particularly recommended for the first six months. Introduce the foods that commonly cause allergies (cow's milk, eggs, wheat, nuts, seeds, fish and shellfish) one at a time so that you can spot any reaction. For babies with allergies it is particularly important not to introduce any of these foods before six months.



## Peanut allergy

Previous advice for children with a family history of allergy was to avoid peanuts until three years of age. This advice has now changed because the latest research has shown that there is no clear evidence to suggest that this will help to reduce the risk of your child developing a peanut allergy.

For children where there is a history of allergy in their immediate family (if the child's parents, brothers or sisters have an allergy such as asthma, eczema, hay fever or other types of allergy), the current advice is that you should speak to your GP or health visitor/public health nurse before introducing peanuts into your baby's diet.

If your child already has a known allergy, such as a diagnosed food allergy or diagnosed eczema, then she has a higher risk of developing a peanut allergy. In this case, you should speak to your GP or health visitor/public health nurse for advice in the first instance.

For children with no known allergies, and no family history of allergy in their immediate family, peanuts can be introduced as part of a healthy, balanced diet from six months in the same way as other foods which commonly cause allergies (that is, one at a time, checking for any reaction).

**Need help?** If you think your baby may have reacted to a food, contact your health visitor/public health nurse or GP. Write down what happened and avoid giving that food again unless advised to do so.



# Recipes

**Remember:** Do not add any sugar or salt to your baby's food.

All recipes are suitable for freezing unless otherwise stated. Freeze in small tubs as soon as the food has cooled.

Use seasonal fruits and vegetables where possible as they tend to be cheaper and tastier.



## Lentil and potato mash (makes 4–5 portions)

50 g red lentils

1 medium potato, peeled and diced

Method:

- Place lentils in a pan. Cover with water and bring to boil. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
- Add potatoes to same pan and cook for a further 10 minutes.
- Drain the mix but reserve the liquid to add later.
- Mash the mix with a couple of dessertspoons of the cooking liquid. Adjust consistency with more of the cooking liquid if required.



## Stewed apple with apricots (makes 2–3 portions)

1 eating apple, peeled and chopped  
5 ready-to-eat dried apricots, chopped into pieces  
2 tablespoons water

### Method:

- Place apple and apricots in a saucepan with the water and gently simmer until the fruit is tender. Add a little more water if necessary during cooking to prevent drying out.
- Mash well to required consistency.





## Simple tomato and vegetable sauce (makes 8 portions of sauce)

Make this simple sauce to accompany pasta.

- 1 dessertspoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped
- ½ a red pepper, washed, deseeded and finely chopped
- ½ a courgette, washed and finely chopped
- 400 g can chopped tomatoes in juice

Method:

- Heat oil and gently soften onion.
- Add pepper and courgette and cook for a further 5 minutes.
- Add tomatoes, cover and cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

To serve with pasta and cheese:

- 15–20 g small pasta shapes
- 1 tablespoon grated full-fat cheddar cheese

Method:

- Cook pasta according to the packet instructions.
- Drain and serve with two dessertspoons of the tomato and vegetable sauce and top with cheese.

**Variation:** Add 200 g (8 oz) minced beef when you are softening the onion and follow the rest of the recipe to make a bolognese sauce. This will increase the number of portions the recipe makes.



## Creamy lentil and vegetable curry (makes 7 portions of curry)

- 1 dessertspoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 small carrot, scrubbed, grated or finely chopped
- 100 g split red lentils
- ½ teaspoon mild curry powder (not paste)
- 200 mls water
- 1 small carton full-fat natural yoghurt

### Method:

- Heat oil and gently soften onion.
- Stir in carrot, lentils and curry powder.
- Add water, stir and bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer for 15–20 minutes. Stir regularly and add a little more water if necessary. The mixture should be quite thick but not dry.
- When the lentils are soft, remove from heat and stir in natural yoghurt.
- Mash as required and serve with boiled white rice.

**Variation:** A small chicken breast with the skin removed and finely diced may be added to the oil at the beginning along with the onion.



Creamy lentil and  
vegetable curry





## **Baby shepherd's pie with special mash (makes 6 portions)**

100 g minced beef

½ small onion, finely chopped

1 small carrot, scrubbed and grated

1 tablespoon of frozen peas

4 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered

1–2 tablespoons full-fat milk

### Method:

- Place mince and chopped onion in a small pan and cook gently until the mince has browned. Add 2–3 tablespoons of water and the grated carrot. Cover and allow to cook gently for 15–20 minutes. Add peas five minutes before the end of cooking time.
- Stir occasionally, adding more water as required.
- Meanwhile boil the potatoes until almost tender. Then drain and mash together with 1–2 tablespoons of milk.
- When mince is cooked, serve with the mashed potato.





## Mashed potato with vegetables (makes 4 portions)

2 medium potatoes (or 1 medium potato and 1 medium parsnip), peeled and diced

5 small florets broccoli

1 spring onion, washed and trimmed

Full-fat milk to mix (optional)

### Method:

- Cook potatoes (and parsnip if used) in a pan of boiling water. Add broccoli to the pan for the last 5 minutes of cooking.
- Drain vegetables and set aside broccoli.
- Mash potato (along with parsnip, if using). Add milk/water to make a smooth mash. Slice spring onion very finely and add to potato.
- Serve with florets of broccoli on the side.



Shepherd's pie  
with special mash





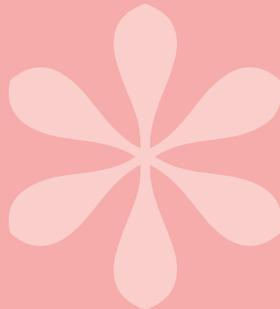
## Home-made carrot soup (makes 6 portions)

Make this for all the family

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 5 large carrots, scrubbed and chopped or grated
- 500 ml of water
- ½ teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1 large potato, peeled and chopped into small pieces
- Approx 150 ml full-fat milk

Method:

- Heat oil in a large saucepan and cook the onion for 5 minutes over a low heat.
- Add carrots, stir and cover. Cook gently for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Add water and nutmeg, and bring to the boil. Add the chopped potato. Cover and simmer for 20–25 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
- Blend. Return to the pan and add enough milk to make a smooth soup. Stir and heat through.
- Serve with pitta slice or toast fingers with butter or margarine.





## Salmon and potato pie (makes 3 portions)

100 g skinless salmon fillet  
2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced  
1 dessertspoon full-fat milk

### Method:

- Pre-heat oven to 180°C. Place salmon on a baking tray or ovenware dish and oven bake for 8 to 10 minutes. The salmon is cooked when the flesh is opaque and flakes easily with a fork.
- Cook potatoes in a pan of boiling water for 10 minutes or until soft. Drain and mash with milk. Add a little more milk if necessary to adjust consistency.
- Flake fish and add to potato – or serve separately.



## Fish cakes (makes 9 small fishcakes)

Salmon and potato pie mixture  
1 egg, beaten

### Method:

- Pre-heat a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and drop small spoonfuls of the fish mix into the pan.
- When the mixture is set and golden on the underside, turn over to cook on the remaining side. Press gently on the golden upper side with a fish slice/palette knife to flatten each fish cake.
- When both sides are golden, remove from pan to cool.

Serve warm or cold. These make very good finger foods.

## How to prevent your baby from choking:

- Always stay with your baby when she is eating.
- Cook hard or stringy vegetables such as green beans and carrots until they are quite soft for use as finger foods, rather than offering them raw.
- Encourage your baby to chew and avoid giving small items such as peas or whole grapes.
- Stop your baby from putting too much food in her mouth in case she chokes.
- Make sure her mouth is empty before the next mouthful of food. It is important to go at your baby's pace.
- Let your baby feed herself so she is in control and the food does not go too far back in her mouth.



Ask your health visitor/public health nurse for advice on how to deal with choking.

**For more recipe ideas, visit your library for cookery books on weaning.**

If you have access to the internet look at some of these websites:  
[www.readysteadybaby.org.uk/growing-together/looking-after-your-growing-baby/weaning-your-baby/index.aspx](http://www.readysteadybaby.org.uk/growing-together/looking-after-your-growing-baby/weaning-your-baby/index.aspx)

[www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

**For more information on how to look after your baby's teeth:**

[www.child-smile.org](http://www.child-smile.org)

**It is very important to get specialist information if you are intending to bring up your child as a vegetarian so take a look at this website:**

[www.vegsoc.org/info/infant.html](http://www.vegsoc.org/info/infant.html)

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