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|  |  | Starting Solid FoodsThe best time to start your baby on solid foods depends on both age and development. |
| Contact**PHONE:****763-333-7733** *24-hour access to care***FAX:****763-333-7711****WEBSITE:****childandteenmedicalcenter.com****EMAIL:****info@childandteenmedicalcenter.com**LOCATIONS:**Blaine:**11107 Ulysses Street NE, Suite 100Blaine, MN 55434**Fridley:**7225 University Ave NEFridley, MN 55432PROVIDERS:Kaylee Adams, CNPJennifer Benton, CNPCatherine Chang, MD John Hollerud, MDJennifer Rousseau, MDStephen Sitrin, MDBenjamin Williams, CNP Molly Wirtz, CNP |  | Developmental Milestones Necessary to Start Solids* At 4-6 months a child should have these skills:

-Sit with support-Good head and neck control-Able to push up why lying face down-Placing hands or toys in mouth-Leans forward and opens mouth when interested in food; leans back and turns away when uninterested in foods or not hungry* At 8-10 months a child should have skills necessary to eat finger foods—sit independently, grasp and release food, chew food (even without teeth), and swallow
* By 12 months, fine motor skills improve allowing children to grasp pieces of food between two fingers

Important to know* Starting before 4-6 months may interfere with child’s ability to take in adequate number of calories or nutrients
* Younger infants do not have the coordination to safely swallow solid foods, which could lead to choking and/or aspiration
* Withholding solid foods after your infant is 6 months old, may lead to decreased growth because child may not consume enough calories from breastmilk or formula alone. Delaying solid foods can also lead to resistance.
* No one food is recommended as first food. Single-ingredient foods should be first, one at a time. Can introduce a new food every 2-3 days.
* As solid foods are introduced, formula intake should decrease, and breastfeeding will continue on demand.
* Signs/symptoms of food allergies: hives or skin rash, facial swelling, vomiting, diarrhea, coughing, wheezing, respiratory difficulties

Precautions* Foods to avoid

-cow’s milk (hard to digest and insufficient iron)-hard, round foods (nuts, grapes, hot dogs, raw carrots, candy, chips, popcorn, etc.)-honey (due to potential risk of harmful bacteria toxin poisoning)* Food allergies: it is now suggested to introduce highly allergenic foods at 4-6 months to decrease risk of food allergies (talk with provider on proper introduction of these foods)

\*\*High risk for food allergies: child with parent or sibling who has allergy, asthma or eczema, or child having eczema\*\*Highly allergenic foods: eggs, peanuts, soy, fish, cow’s milkCereal (1)* Single-grain infant cereal is a good first solid food as it provides calories and additional iron—rice or oat cereal
* Prepared by adding breastmilk or infant formula—initially the consistency should be thin, can thicken over time
* Spoon feed only, do NOT put cereal in bottle (unless recommended by provider)

-Spoon feeding helps to develop infant’s ability to coordinate mouth and swallowing movements as well as enhance future speech development* Start with 1 tablespoon can increase to 4 tablespoons twice a day

Pureed foods (2)* Start with single-ingredient pureed fruits and veggies—if no evidence of allergic reaction, can give multiple foods at once
* The goal is to expose your infant to new flavors and textures of foods
* By 8 months of age, baby should be eating ½ cup of vegetables and ½ cup of fruits daily

Finger Foods (3)* As a child gains the ability to feed himself/herself, a greater variety of “adult” foods can be offered including finely chopped, soft foods
* Foods that you can smash between fingers (steamed veggies, soft fruits)
* Finely ground meats and fish
* Soft bread, noodles, rice, cheese
* Cheerios, graham crackers
* Babies do NOT need teeth for finger foods, can “gum” these foods

DO’s and don'ts* Do allow your child to feed himself/herself when able
* Do allow your child to make a mess with food
* Do introduce a variety of foods (textures and tastes)
* Do encourage a regular eating routine with the child sitting in an appropriate seat at the table with family
* Do NOT give cow’s milk, but DO give yogurt and cheese
* Do NOT give juice
* Do NOT give foods that are choking hazards
* Do NOT put food in bottle
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