

Food for Thought

Parent Information Session



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

We hope you find the following information helpful.

Below are the key points from our session.

Need to know more?
Yarra City Council
9205 5599

MILK

Breastmilk provides all the energy and nutrients that the infant needs for the first months of life, and it continues to provide up to half or more of a child's nutritional needs during the second half of their first year, and up to one third during their second year of life.

World Health Organisation [WHO], 2020

The Infant feeding guidelines encourage continued breastfeeding while introducing appropriate solid foods until 12 months of age and beyond, for as long as the mother and child desire (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013).

Infant formula is important for babies until 12 months of age (Department of Health, 2013).

WHEN TO INTRODUCE SOLID FOODS

The World Health Organisation (2020) and National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) recommend commencing solids at around the age of 6 months to meet the infant's increasing nutritional and developmental needs.

At this age, infants are physiologically and developmentally ready for new foods, textures and other modes of feeding, and they need more nutrients than can be provided by breastmilk or formula alone (WHO, 2020).

Signs of readiness for starting solids include:

- Sitting with support and good head control
- Watching others eat, leaning forwards when food is around
- Opening mouth when food is offered
- Reaching out to grab food and spoons

Signs that might suggest your baby is not ready when food is offered

- Closing their mouth shut and turning their head away/ Pushing spoon away
- Crying
- Unable to maintain head control in supported seating

HOW TO START INTRODUCING SOLID FOODS

Starting solids is a slow and gradual process. Offer food on a small infant-sized spoon at a time that suits both you and your baby when you both can be calm and relaxed. The first few weeks are more about learning to eat and having fun than nutrition, as your baby tries new tastes and textures (Department of Health, 2013). Therefore, it is normal for baby to squash, touch and throw food – this experience helps them learn. (Department of Health, 2013).

Begin by introducing 1 meal per day and gradually increase the quantity and the number of meals based on your baby's appetite and age. Over time you can offer up to 3 meals per day and add snacks, this will be in addition to milk.

Iron-containing nutritious foods are recommended to be included in the first foods. Iron containing foods include iron-fortified cereals, pureed meat and poultry dishes (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013).

When introducing solid food to your baby include allergy causing foods by 12 months. These foods include cooked egg, peanuts, cow's milk (dairy), tree nuts, soy, sesame, wheat, fish and other seafood. These recommendations are the same for babies with a family history of food allergy (Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy [ASCI], 2019).

Whether you take a traditional weaning approach or baby led weaning approach to introducing solids, it is important to encourage foods with more texture by ~ 8 months to encourage chewing and self-feeding (Department of Health, 2013).

By 12 months of age your baby should be eating a wide variety of healthy foods with textures transitioning to family meals. Finger foods and chopped up family meals assist with physical development and encourage children to learn to eat independently (Department of Health, 2013).

Consumption of foods with high levels of saturated fat, added sugars, and/or added salt (e.g. cakes, biscuits and potato chips) should be avoided. To prevent botulism, do not feed honey to infants under 12 months of age (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013).

Feed your baby developmentally appropriate textures (eg nut pastes instead of whole nuts).

BEVERAGES

Encourage drinking water from a cup from about six months of age, boil and cool any water that is to be given to an infant. Bottles should be stopped from around 12 months (Department of Health, 2013).

Do not offer tea, herbal teas, coffee, soft drinks, cordials, fruit juice or other beverages. Any unmodified milk from non-human species, for example cow's, goat's and sheep's milk is not suitable for human infants and should not be given as a main drink before 12 months (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013).

Toddler formulas are not recommended.

ALLERGY PREVENTION

Studies show that this may reduce the chance of developing food allergy in babies and severe eczema or egg allergy. You can rub a small amount of the food inside your baby's lip as a starting point. If there is no allergic reaction after a few minutes, you can start giving small amounts of the food.

Introduce well cooked egg and smooth peanut butter/paste in small amounts to start with, as you would with other foods. You may choose to do this during daytime feeds rather than the evening, so that you can watch your baby and respond if they have an allergic reaction.

Once introduced continue to give these foods to your baby at least twice per week. Trying a new food and then not giving it regularly may result in a food allergy developing.

It is important to note that some babies may still develop a food allergy despite following this advice. If your baby has an allergic reaction stop giving that food and seek medical advice.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST (OT)

Soft Spoon

- Use a plastic spoon at this stage – metal can get hot
- Angled spoons and wide handles can help with a more secure grasp

Plastic Bowl

- Can help with scooping action with hands or a spoon

Drinking cups






- You can start to offer small sips (with help from an adult) from an open cup around 6-8 months. Medicine cups can be a great way to introduce little sips.
- Sippy cups can be used as a “rest stop” cup, moving towards cups with lids or straws

Highchair

- A footrest is suggested for good postural support and allows child to have greater control over their hands. This can be a scarf, TheraBand (to start with at 4 – 6months) and a wooden plate 6+ months



Food and Related Activities

	<p>Tummy Time</p> <p>Tummy time is very important in building strength in our core and control of arms and legs</p>
 	<p>Touch and Taste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> touch and feel books, messy food play, hand rhymes – round and round the garden, lightweight scarves/ cloth (reaching, moving up and down), food play around the mouth (stick shape guiding it around mouth and along lips) – done by an adult, not the baby. Building awareness of bringing hands to face e.g. Peek-a- boo games. You can also use kitchen utensils – silicon oil brush, silicon ice cube trays, big spoons (with supervision) Allow baby to put their hand in their mouth. Munch mitts and teether toys.
	<p>Smell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let your baby smell low fragrance foods
	<p>Sight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding food in front of your baby Sitting in the highchair with a toy rather than food at first to get used to sitting in a chair Mirror play at mealtimes and tummy time Eating in front of your baby

For concerns regarding introducing solids, your child's eating habits, or growth please contact:

- MCH Bookings line – 9205 5599
- 24 Hour MCH Line – 13 22 29
- Dietitian
- GP or Paediatrician

City of Yarra Parenting information sessions

Follow the link below to see some of the other exciting information sessions that are running through the City of Yarra including:

Sleep & Settling
First Aid

Toileting Tips
Sustainability

[Parenting information sessions | Yarra City Council](#)

Useful Instagram accounts:

nicole_kidsphysio
otplay.at.home

demi_nanyphysio
Babysensory.melbourne

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- Australian Capital Territory. 2016. *From Milk to More, Introducing foods to your baby.*
<https://health.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-09/Milk%20to%20More.pdf>
- Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy [ASCIA], 2019. *Parent Information: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) How to Introduce Solid Foods for Allergy Prevention.*
<https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/allergy-prevention/ascia-how-to-introduce-solid-foods-to-babies>
- Better Health Channel. 2013. *Mercury in Fish.*
<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/mercury-in-fish>
- Department of Health. 2013. *Food and active play in the first year of life.*
<https://www.rch.org.au/uploadedFiles/Main/Content/nutrition/first-year-of-life.pdf>
- Department of Health. 2019. *Start Them Right.*
<https://www.health.tas.gov.au/publications/start-them-right-booklet>
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https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n56b_infant_feeding_summary_130808.pdf
- Raising Children's Network. 2006-2020. *Introducing Solids, why, when, what, how.*
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/breastfeeding-bottle-feeding-solids/solids-drinks/introducing-solids>
- Royal Children's Hospital. *Kids Health Information.*
https://www.rch.org.au/ot/information_sheets/Kids_health_information/
- World Health Organisation. 2020. *Breastfeeding.*
https://www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding#tab=tab_1
- World Health Organisation. 2020. *Infant and young child feeding.*
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/infant-and-young-child-feeding>
- Video - Baby Led Weaning Progression: 6 – 10 months.
https://youtu.be/b5X_wEOPGWU
- One handed Cooks
<http://onehandedcooks.com.au/>
- Baby Sensory Online Groups
<https://www.babysensory.com.au/>
- Dietary Guidelines
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/nutrition-fitness/daily-food-guides/dietary-guide-1-2-years>
- Choking Safety
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/babies/safety/choking-strangulation/choking-first-aid-pictures>
- Nip it in the Bub
<https://preventallergies.org.au/>