

LEAPS

learning eating active play sleep

Introducing Solids



Introducing solids is an exciting time for both parents and infants to explore and experiment with food.

From birth to around six months of age, breast milk or a commercial infant formula provides all the nutrients that a growing infant needs. From around 6 months of age, each infant needs additional nutrients for their growing bodies.

What your child learns during this stage of life, has an impact on future eating behaviours and food preferences. It is important to provide a variety of nutritious foods, starting with iron rich foods and age appropriate textures.

Solids should be introduced when your infant:

- Is around six months old
- Is beginning to show interest in food
- Can hold their head steady and sit upright when supported
- Has an increased appetite

NOTE: Do not introduce any solids before four months of age, as your infant's digestive system won't yet be fully developed.

Some tips when introducing solids:

- Continue to breastfeed or formula feed until your child is at least 12 months old
- Cooled boiled water can be offered as an additional drink from six months of age
- Encourage drinking from a cup from around 6 months
- Continue to introduce new foods
- Be patient
- Always supervise your child while they are eating - never leave them alone when eating
- Always sit your child in an upright position to eat/drink
- Let your child see you eating healthy foods too
- Always make meal times fun and relaxing
- Do not add salt, sugar, honey or extra flavours to your child's food
- A small amount of full cream cow's milk can be added in the preparation of solid foods

LEAPS

learning eating active play sleep

Introducing Solids



Food and drinks to avoid:

- Sweetened drinks such as cordials, soft drinks, iced teas, juice
- Cow's milk should not be introduced as a drink until after 12 months of age
- Tea and coffee
- Chocolate
- Potato chips
- Lollies/sweets
- High sugar or high fat snack foods
- Take away foods
- AVOID HARD FOODS, due to a risk of choking (e.g. popcorn or raw carrot)

Stage	Food Texture	Examples of foods that can be consumed
First foods (from around 6 months)	Smooth puree, start to thicken gradually	Iron rich foods, including fortified cereals (e.g. rice), vegetables (e.g. legumes, soy beans, lentils), fish, meat, poultry and cooked plain tofu
Other nutritious foods to be introduced before 12 months	Mashed foods (smooth – lumpy) and then add finger foods	Cooked or soft vegetables (e.g. cooked carrot, cooked potato, tomato), fruit (e.g. apples, banana, melon, avocado. pears), whole egg, cereals (e.g. wheat, oats), bread, pasta, nut pastes, toast fingers and rusks, dairy foods such as full-fat cheese, custards and yoghurt
From 12 to 24 months	Chopped 'family foods'	Family foods Full-cream pasteurised milk