

# wean the weans



Recipes and information to make weaning easy, healthy and enjoyable.





Weaning might seem like a lot to take on when you have a young baby, but making your own foods isn't as hard as you might imagine.

Have some baby wipes at the ready!

Don't worry too much about mess – they love to learn about the texture and feel of food.



**MUMS SAY**



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## About this book

Wean the Weans began in Blackburn, West Lothian in 2008 as a project to provide information and practical support for healthy early feeding. It was co-ordinated by Blackburn Early Years Action Group and initially funded by Community Food and Health Scotland.

The project included running weaning roadshows and courses, providing the basic skills, knowledge and equipment parents needed to make their own baby food.

Some of the parents and staff involved in the project wished there had been a resource they could use which was easy to read and full of the answers to their questions so they decided to create one written by parents for other parents. Funding from West Lothian Council and NHS Lothian has allowed the project to continue and this booklet to be produced.

**This booklet provides information of a general nature and is designed for educational purposes only. Parents should be responsive to their individual babies' needs and follow developmental signs rather than age or weight. Any ages provided in this booklet are an approximate guide. You should always consult your health visitor, doctor or other health professional for advice before weaning or following the guidance in this booklet. Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure that the information is accurate, no legal responsibility is accepted for any omissions or misleading statements.**

## Why make your own baby foods?

It might seem like a lot to take on when you have a young baby, but making your own foods isn't as hard as you might imagine.

### MUMS SAY

Taste the food yourself – compare your own with the jars.



#### Homemade baby foods:

- save money and time, especially if you make enough to freeze for later
- cost around 4p per portion compared to ready made jars that cost around 62p each
- don't contain fillers, hidden sugars, disguised salt flavourings or added water
- taste better (according to our babies and mums!)
- prepare babies for a wide variety of flavours
- get baby used to the family's foods

## About ready made baby foods

It won't always be possible for all the baby's meals to be home made. Combining a mixture of ready made and home made food might be the most practical option for you and your family.

We may feel confident that jars, cans and packets of baby food contain just the right amount and types of ingredients that are best for our babies. They look attractive, and the labels tell us how good they will be.

There is nothing wrong with using some ready made foods sometimes and you shouldn't feel guilty about using them. But, if you use them a lot you should be aware that:

- your baby may be getting a limited variety of foods (depending on what's available in the local shop)
- jars only come in three textures (Stage 1: smooth, single food puree; Stage 2: soft lumps in sauce and Stage 3: chunkier, firmer lumps in sauce). Some babies can find it hard to move between stages
- their smoother textures may discourage chewing – this can affect speech development if used too often
- giving your baby something very different from the rest of the family can lead to fussier eating habits
- specialist baby foods like baby porridge and juices are not needed and can be quite expensive



## Mums Say ...

- Don't make lots of one recipe – babies have a habit of going off things!
- If they refuse a food one day, don't be put off - try another time.
- Wash empty yoghurt pots and use to freeze food in.
- Avoid white clothes – unless you love washing!
- Feed when they're just in a nappy.
- Have some baby wipes at the ready.
- Feed the baby at the same time as the family so they learn about the way you eat as well as what you eat.
- Don't worry too much about mess – they love to learn about the texture and feel of food.
- Be adventurous about trying new things yourself!
- Try making a few recipes at a time using similar ingredients.
- Add a sweet potato when making mash – it's yummy.
- You don't need to buy special 'baby' pasta – just break up the normal stuff into smaller pieces.
- Don't worry about it being bland – your baby will like it without salt or sugar.
- Taste the food yourself – compare your own with the jars.
- Go over the top showing them how great it tastes! They might just copy you.
- Don't be afraid to experiment with your own recipes.
- Tinned fruit can also be used, try peaches or pears in their own juice or water. Mash the fruit and some of the juice together or give slices as finger food.
- You can tell when chicken is cooked by cutting into the thickest part and looking to see that the meat is white all the way through – any pink bits mean it's not cooked right!

## THINKING ABOUT WEANING



# Wean the Weans

# QUIZ

1. **What age should you start weaning?**  
☐ a at around 4 months    ☐ b at around 6 months    ☐ c 1 year
2. **Name a fruit which is not good for freezing.**  
☐ a banana    ☐ b apple    ☐ c pear
3. **Name a suitable first food.**  
☐ a baby rice    ☐ b cooked apple    ☐ c mashed vegetables
4. **When should foods containing iron be introduced?**  
.....
5. **When is it suitable to introduce finger foods?**  
.....
6. **Can you think of two suitable finger foods to try?**  
.....
7. **What ingredients are in homemade cooked apples?**  
☐ a apples    ☐ b sugar    ☐ c water
8. **When can you give a baby full fat cow's milk as a main drink?**  
☐ a at 6 months    ☐ b at 10 months    ☐ c at 1 year
9. **Which of the following could be a suitable drink for infants?**  
☐ a soya milk    ☐ b infant formula    ☐ c breast milk  
☐ d skimmed milk    ☐ e goats milk    ☐ f diluted fruit juice  
☐ g orange squash    ☐ h evaporated milk    ☐ i cooled boiled water
10. **Why should you not start weaning a baby before around 6 months?**  
☐ a their digestive system isn't ready  
☐ b it can lead to obesity in later life  
☐ c they can get all they need from their milk
11. **What could be the result of starting too late?**  
.....

Answers  
1. b - see question 10 and 11 for the reasons why  
2. a - banana goes brown and horrible in the freezer, the other two are good  
3. a, b, and c are all good as long as the pear is ripe and the apple is cooked in the early days  
4. From around 6 months - see page 8 for iron rich food ideas  
5 / 6. Usually from 6 months, when your baby can sit upright on their own, some babies may do this a little later. See page 25 for finger food ideas.  
7. a, with perhaps a bit of c, definitely no b!    8. c - before one year they need breast or formula milk to ensure they get enough iron  
9. b - infant formula    c - breast milk    f - diluted fruit juice    i - cooled boiled water  
10. a, b and c - recent research has shown that it's best to wait until around 6 months  
11. Possible speech difficulties, fussy eating, nutritional deficiencies e.g. iron deficiency anaemia



# Weaning the Weans!

The current UK recommendation is to introduce solid foods along with baby's usual milk at 'around 6 months'

Your baby may be ready for 'solids' if they can:

- **sit up and hold their head steady**
- **take things to their mouth and chew them rather than automatically pushing them out (loss of the 'tongue thrust reflex')**
- **pick up objects and bring them to their mouth accurately**

It's best to follow the signs above and to speak to your health visitor.

## Why wait?

### It's easier...

- you don't need to sterilise plates, bowls and spoons (only bottles) from 6 months
- babies of 6 months can eat most foods
- by 6 months your baby is likely to be able to: sit in a highchair, take food easily from a spoon and/or pick up and hold food to feed themselves
- tap water can be given from 6 months if your baby needs a drink (must be cooled, boiled tap water if you wean early)

### It's healthier...

- your baby's gut and kidneys may not be able to cope with solid food until around 6 months
- swallowing is easier and choking is less likely, since babies neck, head and tongue muscles are usually well developed by 6 months (ask your health visitor for advice if your baby was premature)
- it reduces your baby's risk of obesity
- it reduces your baby's chance of getting tummy infections
- your baby's usual milk is all they need until they're around 6 months and it still continues to give valuable nutrients when they're having solids
- if your baby is breastfed, you and your baby get more benefits for longer (e.g. reduced risk of future allergies, asthma, eczema, diabetes, chest infections, and lower cholesterol for babies and a reduced risk of some cancers and hip fractures for mums)



**NUTRITIONISTS SAY**

## But I want to wean earlier...

The most recent evidence shows that there are generally no health benefits to weaning early. It is best to discuss the signs of readiness with your health visitor or doctor. If you are advised to wean early, **solids should never be given before 17 weeks.**

Before 6 months, foods need to be pureed using a blender or sieved. **All feeding equipment (bowls, plates, spoons etc.) needs to be sterilised before baby is 6 months and any tap water given must be boiled and cooled.**

## Weaning myths



- 1 The wean seems hungrier.
- 2 The wean isn't sleeping through the night.
- 3 The wean seems unsettled and keeps eating his hands.
- 4 I know of babies who were weaned early and they are just fine.
- 5 But this is a big baby...

- 1 It may be a growth spurt and it is usually best to increase the amount of milk given for a few days first.
- 2 It is normal developmentally for babies aged 3 to 5 months to begin waking in the night when they have slept through before. It is not necessarily a sign of hunger. There is no evidence that giving solids increases sleep.
- 3 This may be a development stage or teething rather than a sign of hunger.
- 4 Some babies will be able to cope with solids earlier than 6 months. The problem is that we can't see inside individual babies to see when their gut and kidneys will be ready.
- 5 Yes, but the development of a baby's gut and kidneys matures with age, rather than weight.



Remember, weaning too early may increase the risk of infections and other problems now or in later life (even if we can't see them).

Talk to your health visitor and look out for the signs of readiness (see pg 5)

## How to Wean the Weans!

Adult guidelines for healthy eating are not suitable for young children

### Foods to avoid

#### Foods which should be avoided by babies and small children:

- Salt (babies kidneys can't cope with too much - see pg 14)
- Adult ready meals, gravy and stock cubes which are high in salt (see pg 14 for how to check labels)
- Excess sugar (may lead to obesity and tooth decay)
- Honey, until baby is one (it can contain a bacteria which can make a baby very ill)
- Whole nuts until age 5 (due to choking risk). Smooth nut butters, flaked and ground nuts and nut products are fine from 6 months where family history of allergies is very low
- Other difficult foods that could have a choking risk e.g. skins, whole seeds and whole, round small foods or hard chunks of food (see pg 26 for more information)
- Tea and coffee (due to the tannins which stop iron being absorbed and caffeine which is a stimulant)
- Baby fruit and herbal drinks (they develop a sweet tooth, attack teeth and fill baby up so they might not take enough milk or solids)
- Fizzy, sugary and artificially sweetened drinks (all types develop a sweet tooth, attack teeth and fill baby up)
- Some bottled waters (see pg14)
- Unpasteurised and low fat versions of dairy foods e.g. yoghurt, cheese, milk
- Shark, swordfish or marlin
- Liver pate

#### Until baby is 6 months old it is recommended to also avoid:

- Gluten e.g. bread, rusks, breakfast cereals containing wheat/oats/barley
- Dairy foods (yoghurt, cheese, milk)
- Eggs (includes quorn products, cakes, mayonnaise)
- Citrus fruits, soft berries and fruit juice
- Fish & shellfish
- Nut products
- Seed products
- Soya products

This is because these are the foods that are most commonly linked with allergies.

- Liver (may be harmful to your baby)

**Never leave infants alone when they are eating or drinking.**



## Vitamins:

It is recommended that babies and young children have vitamin drops (A, C and D) up to the age of 5. If you qualify for Healthy Start you can get vitamin drops for free ([www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)).

If you're thinking of having another baby, remember to take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day. If you're pregnant or breastfeeding, it's also recommended that you take 10 mcg of vitamin D every day.

### *Tip:*

*Getting out every day for a short walk, in moderate sunlight, in the summer months will help top up yours and baby's levels of vitamin D: important for bone health.*

## Traditional weaning

The traditional method of weaning where baby is offered food on the spoon:

- Babies are gradually moved onto lumpier and thicker food until eating the same as the rest of the family
- Suitable finger foods should also be encouraged from 6 months
- Breastmilk or Infant formula is the main source of nutrients until babies are a year old
- Solids give extra nutrients, like iron, which babies start to need more of at around 6 months

## 'Baby Led' weaning

When people talk about Baby Led Weaning, it usually means letting babies control the amount of solid food they eat, by feeding themselves (age appropriate) finger foods or foods loaded onto a spoon.

The idea behind it is that a baby's gut is ready for solids at the same time they are able to feed themselves finger foods (after 6 months).

Baby Led Weaning can:

- encourage self-feeding from the start of weaning
- make sure babies set the pace as they lead on how much, and how often they eat
- reduce the time spent preparing foods
- let babies join in with family meals more easily from the start

We know that if babies aren't keen on lumps at first, finger foods can help them learn to chew (see pg 25 for finger food ideas).

**But, there is no scientific evidence that Baby Led Weaning gives babies all the nourishment they need:**

- Usually very small amounts of food are taken in at first
- There may be a risk of your baby not getting enough iron, especially if meats aren't offered at the start
- It may be harder to offer a wide variety of foods (not all foods can be easily given in finger sized portions and babies may struggle to feed themselves with a loaded spoon at first)
- It may make it harder to give breakfast cereals, as most are eaten from a spoon. Most breakfast cereals have added vitamins and iron, that are needed from 6 months

Baby Led Weaning is not suitable for babies with a medical condition or who are younger than 6 months. The nutritional adequacy of Baby Led Weaning is unclear so it is not endorsed by the Scottish Government. Parents are advised to respond to their own babies needs.

# How to Wean the Weans!



All ages are an approximate guide.

A guide to foods during weaning

## When starting solids

mashed foods (at around six months)  
smooth purees (only if advised to wean early: NEVER before 17 weeks)



- Depending on baby's age, start with small amount of puréed/mashed vegetables, fruit or rice cereal with breast milk or formula milk
- Start with 1 or 2 spoon feeds, increasing to 2 or 3 times per day
- Allow plenty of time for feeding, particularly at first. Choose a time when you and baby are relaxed
- Don't rush or force feed your baby, go at your baby's pace (they are very good at regulating their own appetites)
- Don't add sugar or salt to your baby food during or after cooking
- Once your baby develops more of a side-to-side grinding motion make the texture thicker, with chunkier, soft lumps. This allows your baby to work on chewing, gumming and swallowing
- At first they'll drink the same amount of their usual milk. As the amount of food your baby eats increases, their milk will gradually decrease. But, you should still continue to breastfeed for as long as you wish or they should drink around 500–600 mls (16-20 fl oz) of infant formula a day until they are 12 months
- If you've been advised to wean before 6 months, you will need a sieve, blender, or food processor to puree first feeds

## Around 6 – 9 months

mashed food with soft lumps  
soft finger foods  
drinks in a beaker or cup with a lid



- Begin to add different foods and tastes. The more flavours a baby experiences, the less fussy they are likely to be later on
- Babies have hard gums and can learn to chew, even if they have no teeth. Chewing helps their speech muscles develop. Encourage your baby to chew by:
  - giving a variety of finger foods (pg 25)
  - giving foods that have soft lumps (just use a fork to mash)
- Give your baby foods rich in iron every day e.g. beef, pork, lamb, sardines, egg yolk, green vegetables, beans, peas, lentils, cereals with added vitamins ('fortified')
- Introduce a free-flow cup for drinks (water, breastmilk or formula)
- If you are breastfeeding on cue, your baby may not need much water, especially when just starting solids. Make sure nappies are wet and dirty!
- Build up to offering 3 meals a day at around the same times of day. Your baby may not eat them all at first. They will still get most of their nourishment from breast milk and/or formula milk, so try not to worry if they spit out their food or play with it sometimes
- Once your baby is eating 3 meals a day, you can slightly reduce their milk - breastfeed on cue or give at least 500 to 600ml (16 to 20fl oz) of formula milk (follow on formulas are not recommended)
- Use mashed up (salt free) family meals when you can



### MUMS SAY

This is how it's done.



**Be guided by your baby- every baby is different and will develop at their own pace. But, remember it is important to keep offering different tastes and textures throughout their first year. Make sure recipes and finger foods are the right texture for YOUR baby.**



#### **NUTRITIONIST TIPS**

### **Around 9 – 12 months**

firmer finger foods  
minced and chopped family foods



- Use a combination of foods to make up each meal, for example meat or lentils, with rice or mashed potato and some vegetables
- Continue to give 3 meals a day plus healthy snacks
- Move on from mashed to minced, chopped, lumpier foods
- Baby can more easily learn to use a spoon to feed themselves
- Offer baby a wide variety of (salt free) family foods. Give baby plenty of different foods so that they experience plenty of tastes and textures
- Continue to offer iron rich foods every day
- Continue to breastfeed on cue or give at least 500 - 600ml (16 - 20fl oz) of formula milk

### **After 1 year**

mini family meals



- Most one year olds are eating mini (salt free) 'family meals' with a couple of healthy snacks between meals
- Keep offering the foods previously discussed, but make sure the texture is the same as the rest of the family
- Continue to breastfeed on cue or give around 350ml whole cow's milk per day (from a cup) or 2 servings of dairy products

- Be guided by your baby and increase food gradually. Never force your baby to eat
- Keep portions small – babies tummies can't cope with large amounts of food at a time
- Portion sizes for snacks depend on the age, size and appetite of your child, but as a guide a portion is roughly what fits in their palm
- If they don't eat a meal/snack don't offer an alternative, just wait until the next meal or snack
- If your baby refuses food, just clear it away calmly and dispose of it
- If a food is refused, try it again a few days later – it can take up to 15 attempts before your baby may accept it
- Try to make sure there are no distractions, e.g. toys, television
- Sit down to eat with them

**HEALTHY  
START**

**Ask your health visitor or chemist about  
VITAMINS and VOUCHERS for fruit, veg and milk  
or phone the helpline: 0345 607 6823**

# How to Wean the Weans!

All ages are an approximate guide.

A guide to foods during weaning

Food Group	When starting solids mashed foods (at around six months) smooth purees (only if advised to wean early: NEVER before 17 weeks)	Around 6 – 9 months mashed food with soft lumps soft finger foods drinks in a beaker or cup with a lid
<b>Milk, dairy products and substitutes</b>  For healthy teeth & bones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeed on cue or continue to give their usual amount of formula milk at first (As your baby eats more solids, they'll gradually need less of their usual milk)</li> </ul>	<p>Breastfeed on cue or give at least 500 - 600ml (16 - 20fl oz) formula milk daily.</p> <p><b>You can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use breast, formula or whole cow's milk to mix solids</li> <li>Start to offer full-fat dairy foods like: cheese sauce, cubed cheese, natural yoghurt (you can add fruit), fromage fraise, unsweetened custard (made using custard powder)</li> </ul>
<b>Bread, rice, potatoes pasta &amp; other starchy foods</b>  For energy	<p><b>You can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start with wheat free and low fibre cereals e.g. plain baby rice, millet or quinoa, mixed with baby's usual milk</li> <li>Begin with smooth or well mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes or yam</li> </ul>	<p><b>2 – 3 servings daily</b></p> <p><b>You can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start to give foods that contain wheat like: chopped pasta, porridge, Ready Brek, Weetabix, toast fingers, chapatti, pitta bread, semolina, plain noodles and white rice</li> <li>Mash foods less well - leaving small lumps</li> </ul>
<b>Fruit and vegetables</b>  For fibre, vitamins & minerals	<p><b>You can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start with smooth or well mashed cooked vegetables like: cooked carrot, parsnip, broccoli, cauliflower</li> <li>Give smooth or well mashed ripe banana, avocado, mango or pears (pg15)</li> <li>Try cooked apple (pg15) or tinned pear/apricots in natural juice</li> </ul>	<p><b>2 servings daily</b></p> <p><b>You can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give soft cooked and cooled veg. like carrot sticks, small florets of broccoli/cauliflower</li> <li>Give peeled, sliced, ripe soft fruit (e.g. banana, melon, pear, peaches) as finger foods (see pg 25 for more ideas)</li> <li>Mash cooked vegetables and fruit less well, they can be lumpier and thicker in texture</li> </ul>
<b>Meat, fish, eggs beans and other non-dairy sources of protein.</b>  For growth & development	<p><b>Once your baby is eating fruit, vegetables and potatoes (and is 6 months) then you can give:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sieved cooked lentils</li> <li>Pureed chicken or red meat. (well cooked and made without salt)</li> </ul> <p>You could mix with pureed/well-mashed rice or potatoes.</p>	<p><b>1 serving daily</b></p> <p><b>You can give:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blended, minced or mashed meat, fish or chicken (well cooked and made without salt). Remember to take out any bones</li> <li>Mashed well cooked eggs</li> <li>Soft cooked and/or mashed pulses (lentils, split peas, chickpeas)</li> <li>Mashed beans e.g. baked beans, butter beans</li> <li>Smooth nut butters/seed pastes (if there is no history of allergies in the family)</li> <li>Blended, minced or mashed vegetarian alternatives like quorn, tofu and textured vegetable protein (remember to give pulses and eggs too as some meat alternatives can be low in energy)</li> </ul>



**Be guided by your baby- every baby is different and will develop at their own pace. But, remember it is important to keep offering different tastes and textures throughout their first year. Make sure recipes and finger foods are the right texture for YOUR baby.**



#### NUTRITIONIST TIPS

### Around 9- 12 months

firmer finger foods  
minced and chopped  
family foods



### After 1 year

mini family meals



Breastfeed on cue or give 500 - 600ml (16 - 20 fl oz) formula milk daily.

#### You can:

- Keep using breast, formula or whole cow's milk to mix solids
- Continue to offer other dairy foods e.g. custard, yoghurt, cheese sauce, cubed cheese

Breastfeed on cue, or give a minimum of 350ml of whole cow's milk daily, or 2 servings of other dairy products.

#### You can:

- Give whole cow's milk as a drink after 1 year (toddler formulas are not needed)
- Use lower fat milks in cooking for convenience (but not as a main drink as they don't have enough energy)
- Give pasteurised goats milk, sheeps milk or unsweetened soya milk (with added calcium) if desired after 1 year

- If milk drinks are refused as your baby gets older, try alternatives like cheese or yoghurt, giving water to drink
- Giving large amounts of milk after 1 year (more than 600ml) can reduce baby's hunger for solids
- Giving all drinks in a free-flow cup by a one year old helps prevent baby drinking too much milk, it keeps teeth healthier and helps speech muscles develop
- Follow on and toddler formulas are not needed or recommended
- Goat's and sheep's milk formulas don't have the right balance of nutrients for babies and are also not recommended
- Rice milk is not suitable for children under 4 1/2 years old

### 3 - 4 servings daily

- Encourage wholemeal products e.g. wholemeal bread
- Starchy foods can be the same texture as the rest of the family's food

### Minimum of 4 servings daily

- Try to give at least 1 serving of starchy foods at each mealtime

- Most breakfast cereals have B vitamins and iron added ('fortified') - they make a great healthy snack or finger food! (you can soften with a little milk to start with)
- Never add baby rice or rusks to a bottle

### 3 - 4 servings daily

#### You can:

- Encourage lightly cooked or raw fruits and vegetables
- Just chop food and try more fruits and vegetables as finger foods (see pg 25)

### Minimum of 4 servings daily.

#### You can:

- Give food that is the same texture as the rest of the family, though some fibrous foods may still be difficult (e.g. celery, radish)

- Seasonal veg is usually cheaper and tastier!
- If you can only get fruit tinned in syrup, just rinse it off with water (cooled, boiled if baby is under 6 months)
- If your baby doesn't like cooked vegetables, they might like things like grated carrot or chopped tomato or try hiding them in soups, stews and sauces
- Tinned veg should be in water *not* salted water
- Giving fruit or vegetables with every meal helps your baby absorb iron (as they contain vitamin C)
- Keeping dried fruit and fruit juices to mealtimes will reduce attack on teeth

### Minimum 1 serving daily or 2 from vegetable sources.

- Meat can be minced or chopped
- For vegetarian babies use a mixture of different meat alternatives, vegetables and starchy foods (e.g. macaroni cheese or lentils with rice)

### Minimum 1 serving daily or 2 from vegetable sources.



- Meat can just be chopped
- Try to give low fat (lean) meat and oily fish (e.g. sardines, herring, mackerel)
- Liver pate can be used after 1 year

- Tinned tuna or sardines are quick, easy and nutritious (try them in oil, spring water or a tomato sauce, as brine is salty)
- Shop bought fish fingers are fine now and again from around 9 months or you could take the outside breaded part off for younger babies, it can be salty and hard to chew.
- Try to buy lean cuts of meat, or trim (visible) fat off
- Try not to add fat when cooking foods which already contain fat (such as meat)
- Whole peanuts should be avoided until 5 years of age as there is a choking risk
- Liver contains lots of iron but it should only be eaten a maximum of once a week until 1 year

# How to Wean the Weans!

All ages are an approximate guide.

A guide to foods during weaning

Food Group	When starting solids mashed foods (at around six months) smooth purees (only if advised to wean early: NEVER before 17 weeks)	Around 6 – 9 months mashed food with soft lumps soft finger foods drinks in a beaker or cup with a lid
<b>Occasional foods</b>   Foods high in fat and sugar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to choose low sugar puddings</li> <li>Avoid high salt foods- babies kidneys can't cope with much salt</li> </ul>	<b>Try to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limit salty and sugary snacks e.g. flavoured yogurt/ fromage frais, biscuits ( e.g. rich tea/ digestive), rusks , chocolate and crisps so they don't get into the habit of expecting them and so that their salt intake is low</li> <li>Give bread or fruit if hungry between meals.</li> <li>Limit fruit juice and dried fruit to mealtimes</li> </ul>
<b>Drinks</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is a good idea to introduce a cup with meals e.g. expressed breast/ formula milk or tap water from 6 months (sterilise the cup and give only boiled and cooled tap water if advised to wean before 6 months)</li> </ul>	<b>You can:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer a cup of expressed breast, formula milk or tap water with meals</li> <li>Give 100% unsweetened fruit juice if you wish, but it is not needed (if your child is vegetarian though, it can be useful as it helps them absorb iron). If you do give it, dilute it at least 50/50 with water and keeping it to meal times will keep teeth healthy</li> </ul>



## MUMS SAY

### Some meal ideas from around 9 months:

#### Breakfast:

- Porridge (pg 18), Weetabix or Ready Brek with breast, formula or full fat cow's milk or
  - Toast with well-cooked egg (scrambled, poached or boiled)
- Plus*  
Breast feed or cup of formula milk

#### Lunch:

- Baked beans with fingers of toast
- Sandwiches filled with chopped meat, fish or egg
- Tomato soup (page 16) or lentil soup (page 21) with a sandwich
- Pasta shapes in tomato sauce (page 24) with grated cheese
- Carrot and pepper risotto (pg 19)

Be guided by your baby- every baby is different and will develop at their own pace. But, remember it is important to keep offering different tastes and textures throughout their first year. Make sure recipes and finger foods are the right texture for YOUR baby.



#### NUTRITIONIST TIPS

### Around 9 – 12 months



Firmer finger foods minced and chopped family foods

- You can use moderate amounts of butter or margarine
- Small amounts of jam can be used on bread
- Continue to limit salty and sugary foods

- Continue to breastfeed and give a little water in a cup with meals.
- Or offer most formula milk drinks from a cup

### After 1 year mini family meals



- Continue to limit salty and sugary foods
- Try to give bread or fruit if hungry between meals.
- Do not add sugar to foods and limit fruit juice and dried fruit to mealtimes

- Continue to breastfeed and give a little water/ well diluted fruit juice in a cup with meals
- Or offer all drinks from a cup (including milk)

- Don't add salt to babies food (under a year old they should have less than 1g salt a day (2.5g sodium). This would only cover the tip (around 1/6th) of a teaspoon!
- Don't give babies under 1 year honey - it may contain a bacteria which can make them very ill. Honey is also just another form of sugar

#### Remember:

- It is best if baby is drinking all drinks from a cup by around 1 year
- As baby eats more foods, increase the amount of fluids you give (cooled, boiled before 6 months)
- Whole cow's milk should not be used as the main drink until after 1 year. (If your child eats well, semi-skimmed milk can be given from 2 years)
- The acid in fizzy drinks, 'diet' drinks and sugar-free squashes can damage teeth. 'Diet' drinks and sugar-free squashes contain artificial sweeteners which are not suitable for children under 3 years
- Tea and coffee reduce the amount of iron that is absorbed from food
- If you do give fruit juice, 100% fruit juice 'from concentrate' still counts as a fruit portion
- Some bottled waters are not suitable (see pg 14)

#### Dinner:

- Minced or chopped meat, mashed potatoes and chopped peas (try mince and tatties on pg 22)
- Fish fingers, chopped peas and mashed potatoes
- Chicken casserole (pg 20) and rice
- Creamy lentil and vegetable curry (page 20)
- Vegetable risotto (pg 23) with grated cheese
- Pasta shapes in cheese sauce (page 24 for sauce) with tender carrots
- Broccoli and cauliflower cheese (pg 16 for broccoli/cauliflower, pg 24 for cheese sauce), boiled potatoes with cooked and cooled green beans

#### Dessert:

- Slices of fresh soft fruit, e.g. pear, banana, melon
- Stewed fruit e.g. apples (pg 15), apricots, prunes (with stones removed)
- Tinned soft fruit in natural juice, e.g. mandarins, peaches, pears
- Milk pudding, natural yoghurt (not 'low fat' varieties) or plain fromage frais (try adding stewed or mashed fruit)



## Food labels - What do they mean?

Ingredient	What does it mean?
Fructose Sucrose Maltose Glucose Dextrose Invert sugar Glucose syrup Honey Fructose Syrup Maltodextrin Concentrated fruit juice	Sugar by another name (empty calories)  <div> <p><b>Remember to look for all the names for sugar!</b></p> <p>Experts say that around 6 months is the best time to start solids, but some baby foods still say 'suitable from 4 months' on the label. If you do start before 6 months, check they are 'gluten free' first.</p> </div>
Added water	Used to make food go further
Added vitamins	Often added to replace natural vitamins lost during the processing, may be added as a natural colouring agent e.g. carotene (orange)
Maltodextrin Whey Emulsifiers	Cheap fillers used to add bulk to the food
Yeast Extract	Hidden salt flavour



**MUMS SAY**

To get a feel for whether a product is high in a certain ingredient such as salt or added sugar, have a look at the ingredient list. The ingredient list always starts with the biggest ingredient first.

## If using shop bought food, remember:



### Salt

Babies need **less than 1g of salt per day**. That's as little as the tip (around one sixth) of a teaspoon! The salt in most food is made up of 2 chemicals: sodium and chlorine. So salt is often listed as 'sodium' (sometimes called 'Na').

To work out the approximate salt content from 'sodium', multiply the amount of sodium by 2.5.

High salt is **more than 1.5g per 100g (0.6g sodium)**

Low salt is **less than 0.3g salt per 100g (0.1g sodium)**

**Check food labels. Remember your baby won't eat exactly 100g!**



### Bottled Water

If you have to use bottled water (e.g. abroad) choose one labelled as suitable for infants (there may be a picture of a baby on the label) *or* check the label:

- **Sodium (or 'Na') should be lower than 200 milligrams (mg) per litre.**
- **Sulphates (sometimes called 'SO' or 'SO4') should be lower than 250 mg per litre.**

**It will still need boiled, like tap water, before you prepare any formula feeds (for babies of all ages).**

**As a drink, boil and cool it for babies under 6 months.**

**Ask your health visitor for information**

# Recipes

## When starting solids

### Potato and carrot

Depending on sizes of vegetables can make 5/6 portions

#### Ingredients:

- 2 carrots
- 1 large potato

#### Method:

1. Peel potato and carrot, removing any blemishes on them.
2. Slice into pieces and boil in water until soft.  
DO NOT ADD SALT!
3. Mash with a hand blender, or sieve and spoon, until desired consistency.

This recipe can be frozen in small portions for use later. Defrost thoroughly before use. If re-heating, eat through thoroughly and then allow to cool before use.

Other combinations of vegetables can be used according to taste. It might, however, give you peace of mind to offer new tastes one at a time in the first instance.



Use empty yogurt pots to freeze portions

MUMS SAY

### Cooked apple

#### Ingredients:

- 2 eating apples
- Water

#### Method:

1. Wash, peel and core the apples.
2. Place in pot and cover with a little boiling water, and simmer until soft for about 5-10 minutes
3. Cool and mash or blend to a puree depending on your baby's needs
4. Use on its own or mix with a little baby rice



Give tinned fruit sliced as finger food

MUMS SAY

### Easy pears

#### Ingredients:

Tin of pear halves in natural juice

#### Method:

1. Drain most of the juice from a tin of pears
2. Mash with a fork or blend to a smooth puree as desired
3. Use like the cooked apple

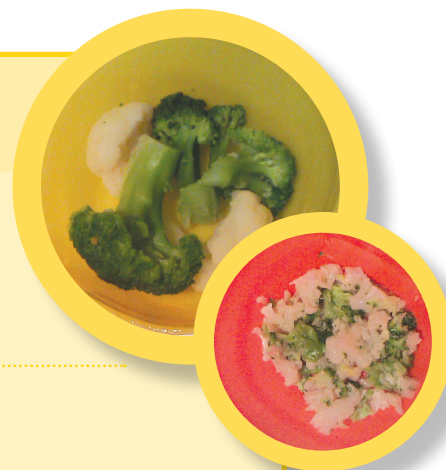
## Broccoli and cauliflower

### Ingredients:

3 stalks of broccoli and cauliflower  
water

### Method:

1. Wash the vegetables, place in pot with the water and simmer until soft
2. Drain but keep the water
3. Puree/mash adding some of the cooking water, or try cooked florets as finger food from 6 months



Don't add salt to foods for young children- it might be a good time for the whole family to cut down, although it can be added by adults if desired for themselves.



**NUTRITIONISTS SAY**

## Fruit fool

Suitable from 6 months

Many fruits of your own choice can be used for this quick and easy pudding such as: Banana, mango, peach, cooked apple, cooked pear etc.

The softer the fruit, the less time it will take to prepare

### Ingredients:

Ripe mango  
2 tablespoons of plain, full fat  
Greek yoghurt

### Method:

1. Slice through the mango on either side of the stone
2. Peel, then cut the flesh into cubes.
3. Mash or puree with blender until smooth depending on your baby
4. Stir in the yoghurt

Can be frozen for up to 4 weeks, however, it is so tasty, you might want to finish it off yourself!



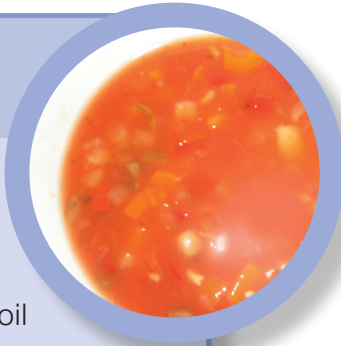
## Tomato soup

### Ingredients:

- 1 pint water
- 1 tin of chopped tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon vegetable or olive oil
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 medium onion
- 1 teaspoon tomato puree
- a variety of vegetables as preferred e.g. 1 medium carrot, 1 pepper, any colour
- some chopped or dried herb for flavour e.g. basil, parsley, oregano

### Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large pot on medium heat
2. Chop the garlic, onion and other vegetables and add to the pot, stirring until onions are soft
3. Add the water, tomato puree, tinned tomatoes and herbs
4. Bring to the boil then turn down to simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally
5. This recipe can also be used for making minestrone soup by adding 1 cupful of small pasta, halfway through cooking
6. Blend or mash with a fork to get the right texture for your baby



## Lentil soup

### Ingredients:

- 1 pint of water
- a variety of vegetables as preferred e.g. 1 medium carrot 1 medium onion 1 leek 1/2 small turnip 1-2 cups of lentils (depending on thickness desired)

### Method:

1. If possible, soak the lentils in cold water for an hour before you want to start cooking
2. Using a large pot, add fresh water and the lentils and put on low heat while preparing vegetables
3. Peel and chop the vegetables and add them to the pot
4. Turn heat up and bring to the boil then turn down the heat to simmer for approximately 30 minutes, stirring occasionally
5. Add more water if it's too thick, cook with the lid off if too runny
6. Mash large chunks with fork to serve



If they refuse a food one day, don't be put off - try another time.

**MUMS SAY**

## More ideas from 6 months

### *Baby porridge with apricots*

#### **Ingredients:**

- 2 tablespoon porridge oats
- 4 tablespoons baby's own milk or full fat cow's milk
- 2 ready-to-eat dried apricots, chopped

#### **Method:**

1. Put the oats and milk into a pot and bring gently to simmer, stirring
2. When the porridge has thickened and the oats are soft, add the chopped apricots
3. Simmer the porridge for another couple of minutes till the apricots are soft too
4. Blend/mash well for a younger baby or leave lumpier for an older one.  
Add a little more milk if the porridge is too thick
5. The apricots will naturally sweeten the porridge – you could also try prunes or similar dried fruits



The best way to make sure your baby gets all the nutrients they need is to offer a wide variety of foods of different colours and textures.



**NUTRITIONISTS SAY**

## *Carrot and pepper risotto*

**Makes 2-4 servings depending on baby's appetite.**

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 small onion
- 1 small carrot
- 1 small red pepper
- 25g risotto or long grain rice
- 200ml water
- Small pinch dried rosemary
- 2-3 tablespoons full-fat milk

### **Method:**

1. Peel and chop carrot and onion
2. Wash, core, deseed and finely chop red pepper
3. Put all ingredients, except milk, into a saucepan
4. Bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 15 mins until rice is soft
5. Add enough milk to make a smooth thick puree or mash depending on your baby's age
6. Serve one portion immediately

Can store in fridge for 24 hours or freeze extra portion to use later (use within 6 weeks).

## *Chicken, broccoli and courgette*

**3-6 servings depending on age and appetite of baby**

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 cooked chicken breast
- 3 pieces of broccoli
- 1 courgette

### **Method:**

1. Wash the broccoli and courgette and cut into small pieces
2. Place in pot with cooked chicken
3. Cover with boiling water and simmer for 10 -15mins until vegetables are soft
4. Puree/mash down to the right texture for your baby

**Try a steamer to cook veg, fish or chicken- it's healthy.**





## More tastes and textures

### *Creamy lentil and vegetable curry*

#### Ingredients:

- 1 dessertspoon vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 carrot, scrubbed, grated or finely chopped
- 100g split red lentils
- 1 teaspoon korma paste or 1 teaspoon mild curry powder
- 200ml water
- 100ml canned coconut milk

#### Method:

1. Heat the oil and gently fry the onion 'til soft
  2. Stir in the carrot, lentils and korma paste/curry powder
  3. Add the water and coconut milk, stir and bring to the boil
  4. Cover and reduce heat, simmering gently for 15 - 20 minutes  
Keep checking and stirring, adding more water if required
  5. When the lentils are soft, remove from the heat and allow to cool
  6. Mash to the right texture for your baby
- Serve on it's own or with plain boiled rice.



**Avoid white clothes  
– unless you love  
washing!**



**MUMS SAY**

### *First chicken casserole*

#### Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 small carrot, chopped
- 1 small leek, sliced
- 1 chicken breast, cut into chunks
- 1 medium potato, chopped
- 1 small parsnip, chopped

#### Method:

1. Peel or wash the vegetables and chop into small pieces
2. Warm the oil in a pan, add carrots and leeks and cook over medium heat until soft
3. Add the chicken and cook, turning until sealed
4. Add the other vegetables and just cover with boiling water
5. Cover and simmer for about 25 minutes, or until tender and cooked through
6. Chop well or mash to serve to suit your baby



## Carrot & bean stew

Makes 2-4 servings depending on baby's appetite

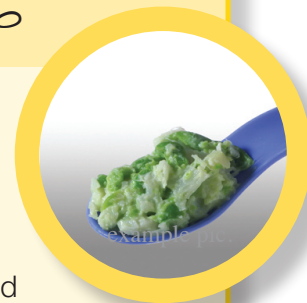
### Ingredients:

- 1 carrot
- 1 parsnip
- 1 onion
- Small piece leek
- 25g tinned haricot/butter or other beans (without added salt or sugar)
- 75ml water
- Pinch mixed herbs
- 1 tomato

### Method:

1. Peel and chop carrot, onion and parsnip. Chop the leek and wash well in a sieve
2. Drain and rinse the beans
3. Put onion, carrots, parsnip, leek and beans in pot with the water and herbs
4. Simmer until tender, adding extra water if mixture becomes too dry
5. Wash and finely chop the tomato and add to the pot, cook for a further 2-3 minutes
6. Mash or chop to serve, depending on what texture your baby is used to

## Fishy mashed potato



### Ingredients:

- 125g (4oz) white fish  
e.g. cod, haddock, pollock
- 150mls (1/4 pint) full fat milk
- 1 large potato peeled and sliced
- 1 leek, trimmed and sliced
- Bay leaf (optional)

### Method:

1. Put the fish and bay leaf in a pot and pour over the milk
2. Bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 5/6 minutes until cooked
3. Remove the fish using slotted spoon, flake it and roughly mash with a fork, removing any bones. Keep the milk
4. Meanwhile, cook the potatoes and leek in boiling water for 10 minutes or until tender, then drain
5. Mash the potatoes and leek with a little of the milk to make a smooth mixture. Stir in the flaked fish

Try using herbs or tomato puree for infants to add more flavour.



**NUTRITIONISTS SAY**

# Family recipes

(just mash or chop to suit your baby's needs)

## Stovies

(serves 4)

### Ingredients:

- 2 onions
- 6 large tatties
- 10 skinless sausages (the higher the meat content the better)

### Method:

1. Peel and slice the potatoes, onions and sausage
2. In a large pot begin by putting in a thin layer of sausage then add layers of tatties and onions
3. Repeat with sausage, tatties and onions until all the ingredients are used
4. Add 1 mug of water, put on the lid and simmer on a low heat for 30 minutes or until tatties are soft
5. Serve and enjoy!



## Mince and tatties

(serves 4)

### Ingredients:

- 500g minced beef
- 1 onion
- 1 carrot
- 50g turnip

### Method:

1. Peel and grate the vegetables
2. Heat the pot and add the mince. Cook for about 3-5 minutes, stirring to break up the meat
3. Add the grated vegetables and cook for another 5 minutes
4. Add enough water to cover, put on a lid and simmer for at least 30 minutes
5. Meanwhile peel, chop and boil some tatties but don't add salt
6. Take a portion of the mince out for the baby and set aside, then add stock or salt and pepper if you like for the rest of the family and cook for another 5 minutes
7. If it's too dry add a bit more water, if too runny, take the lid off to let it reduce down
8. Drain and mash the tatties with some milk if you like.



Meat and fish are excellent sources of the protein needed for growth and development

**NUTRITIONISTS SAY**



## Vegetable risotto

Makes four adult sized portions (or more baby portions depending on babies age)

### Ingredients:

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 butternut squash, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 225g of risotto rice (Arborio rice if you can)
- 1 litre homemade stock (pg 24)
- 50g (matchbox size) cheese, grated

### Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large heavy-based saucepan, add the butternut squash, onion and garlic and fry until the onion is soft but not brown
2. Add the rice to the pan and carry on cooking for 2 minutes, stirring all the time to coat the rice in the oil
3. Add the stock a small amount at a time, stirring constantly. Allow the stock to be soaked up before adding more. Carry on until all the stock has been used up and the rice is cooked, it should be a rich creamy texture
4. Stir in the cheese and serve decorated with grated cheese

## Cullen skink

(serves 4)



### Ingredients:

- 1 large or 2 small smoked haddock fillets
- 1 onion
- 500ml full cream milk (until baby is 2)
- 250g mashed potato
- knob of margarine

### Method:

1. Put the fish and onion in a large pot with enough water to cover it
2. Bring to the boil then simmer for 10 minutes till the fish flakes easily and is cooked through
3. Lift out the fish with a draining spoon, put it on a plate and break into small pieces, checking for any bones
4. Add the potato, milk and butter to the liquid and cook for 10 minutes, then add the fish and cook for another 5
5. If you want to add salt and pepper, take out a baby portion first
6. Nice sprinkled with some chopped parsley

Feed when they're just in their nappy or buy cheap tops.



**MUMS SAY**

## Basic cheese sauce



### Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon cornflour
- 150mls whole cow's milk
- 50 grams grated cheese

### Method:

1. Mix the cornflour into a little milk and add to the pot
2. Heat, stirring continuously until sauce thickens, then gradually add the rest of the milk
3. Cook for another 5 minutes till the sauce is thickened, then add cheese and stir through

This can be frozen in small portions and reheated in the microwave. It can be used with pasta, steamed or boiled vegetables, potatoes, flaked fish (bones removed). Just mash to the right texture for your baby.



## Basic tomato sauce

### Ingredients:

- 1 small onion
- 1 small clove garlic
- 1 small carrot
- 1 small red pepper
- 1 tin tomatoes
- splash of olive oil
- optional herbs – oregano or basil are good

### Method:

1. Chop the vegetables and garlic finely
2. Put the olive oil in a saucepan then gently soften the onion and garlic in it
3. Add the carrot, pepper and celery and cook for another 3 minutes
4. Add the tomatoes and herbs if using, then simmer for at least 10 minutes
5. When the vegetables are soft, take off the heat and allow to cool a little before blending or mashing.

This sauce can be used with any pasta. Try adding drained tinned tuna, grated cheddar cheese or cream cheese, other seasonal veg such as mushrooms, courgette or broccoli. Just mash to the right texture for your baby.

## How to make homemade vegetable stock

If you have time, try making your own salt-free stock. You could make a large batch, divide it into smaller portions and freeze it, so you always have some to hand when you need it.

### To make a salt-free vegetable stock

roughly chop some vegetables - for example  
2 large carrots,  
6 sticks of celery,  
2 medium onions,  
1 large parsnip.

### Method:

1. Place them in a large pan with 1 bayleaf, 2 teaspoons of black peppercorns and 2.5 litres of water
2. Simmer uncovered for 1 hour, then strain with a sieve

## Finger foods!

Finger foods help babies chew, bite and feed themselves and help their co-ordination.

- Keep them big enough for your baby to hold.
- Take out pips, seeds and stones and peel skins at first
- Make sure your baby can sit upright on their own.

### Foods that mash in the mouth! (usually from 6 mths)

- Slices of soft, ripe fresh fruit e.g. mango, banana, pear, avocado
- Steamed or boiled vegetables (e.g. tender carrot sticks, broccoli and cauliflower florets)
- Tinned pear slices in natural juice
- Buttered toast fingers (use bread with no seeds at first)

### Foods that need more chomp! Next you could try:

- Melon slices
- Tinned peach slices in natural juice
- Roasted vegetable sticks e.g. sweet potato, butternut squash,
- Plain cooked pasta shapes
- Mini breakfast cereals e.g. cereal hoops or mini oatibix (softened with milk at first)
- Mini rice cakes (unsalted)
- Sticky rice balls (unsalted basmati rice sticks well!)
- Pitta bread/ chapatti fingers
- Bread crusts
- Cheese strips or cubes

### For the experienced chewer! Firmer textures:

- Peeled cucumber sticks
- Cooked and cooled green beans
- Mini sandwiches with chopped meat, fish or egg
- Pineapple slices
- Halved or quartered grapes (cut top to bottom, lengthways)
- Halved or chopped cherry tomatoes
- Apricots or prunes cut into strips
- Small pieces of (unsalted) minced meat
- Quartered hard boiled eggs
- Chunks of cooked fish
- Strips of cooked meat

Never leave infants alone when they are eating or drinking.

**Make sure your baby is supported and sitting upright (a highchair is best). Just put a few finger foods in front of your baby to reach out and pick up. Start by offering finger foods that mash in the mouth. When your baby can manage these well, move onto other soft finger foods. Once your baby can chew well, you can offer firmer finger foods. Just be guided by your baby.**

## Food allergies

Babies are more likely to develop allergies where there is a history of eczema, asthma, hayfever or food allergies in the family.

### How can I reduce the risk of my baby getting allergies?

- Wait until your baby is around 6 months old and showing signs of readiness (pg 5) before weaning
- Any breastfeeding reduces the risk of allergies. However, fully breastfeeding for the first 6 months (no food or formula) then continuing to give breast milk when weaning gives the best protection
- If you have been advised to wean your baby early, not giving any of the foods which are linked to allergies will help reduce the risk (see pg 6)
- Offering foods one at a time so you can spot any reaction might give you peace of mind.
- Lunch time is a good time to offer new tastes, as if there is a reaction, your health visitor or doctor will be contactable

### How will I know if my child has a food allergy?

Food allergies affect only a small number of babies. Mild rashes around the mouth are quite common when weaning and children often cough and bring up small amounts of food when they are learning to swallow.

However, if your child develops a very itchy rash, itchy eyes, sickness, diarrhoea or a very runny nose after eating a certain food, then chat to your health visitor who may refer you to a dietitian for help.

Cutting out a major food, such as milk is not a good idea, as this could lead to your child not getting the nutrients they need.

### Severe allergies

Most children grow out of their food allergies, but in a few cases foods can cause a very severe reaction (anaphylaxis) that can be life threatening. Severe allergies (e.g. peanut allergy) are very rare, but they do affect 1-2% of the population. In the unlikely event that your child's lips and throat become swollen and they are having difficulty breathing call 999.



## Food additives

Food contains additives for a variety of reasons. Additives are used to prevent food poisoning, to stop food going off and to provide colour, flavour or texture.

Some food additives are natural substances and some are man-made. Additives with an 'E' number have been tested and passed as safe for use in EU countries. Numbers without an 'E' in front are allowed in the UK but not in all EU countries.

A few people have reactions to some food additives, but reactions to ordinary foods such as milk or soya are much more common. You might want to avoid the following colourings if you are worried about 'hyperactivity': E102 Tartrazine, E104 Quinoline Yellow, E110 Sunset Yellow, E122 Carmoisine, E124 Ponceau 4R, E129 Allura Red. Processed foods like ready meals contain the most additives, and can often be high in salt, sugar and fat, so it is better where possible to make your own meals.

## Preventing choking

Babies and children sometimes don't chew their food properly making them gag and cough. Try to keep calm if your baby gags a little on food at first. It can be scary to watch, but gagging and coughing usually clears food from the back of the throat so that your baby doesn't choke on it.

To prevent choking:

- Stay with your baby when they are eating or drinking
- Ensure your baby is upright when eating solid food
- Don't insist that your baby eats if they cry or resist
- Provide foods that are soft enough for them to gum or chew (see recipes)
- Avoid whole, round foods such as whole nuts, whole peas, whole grapes, whole cherry tomatoes, boiled sweets and popcorn
- Be careful with hard foods like raw carrot sticks or large apple pieces. At first, you peel and grate them and lightly cook tough vegetables to give as finger foods
- Cook stringy fibrous vegetables, like green beans, until soft to give as finger food
- Also be careful with foods with skin (like sausages) or fish with bones. Remove all skin and bones before feeding to your baby

For more guidance on safe finger foods, see page 25 and the recipes and tables in this booklet.

### Choking advice

Provided they are ready for solid food, babies will usually gag and cough up food that gets stuck in their throat. However, it may put your mind at ease to know what to do if a baby is choking:

**If the infant is distressed, is unable to cry, cough, or breathe:**

- Lay them face down along your forearm, with their head low, and support the back and head.
- Give up to **5 back slaps**, with the heel of your hand
- Check the infant's mouth; remove any obvious obstructions
- **Do not** do a finger sweep of the mouth

**If the airway is still blocked:**

- Turn the infant onto his back and give up to **5 chest thrusts**
  - Use two fingers, push inwards and upwards (towards the head) against the infants breastbone, one finger's breadth below the nipple line
  - The aim is to relieve the obstruction with each chest thrust rather than necessarily doing all five
- Check the mouth

**If the obstruction does not clear after 3 cycles of back slaps and chest thrusts:**

- **Dial 999 for an ambulance**
- Continue until help arrives

# Food safety and hygiene

**Hygiene in the kitchen is very important, especially as young children's immune systems are not fully developed. Here are some tips to help reduce the risk of food poisoning**

- Wash hands thoroughly before preparing food.
- Use different chopping boards/work surfaces for raw food and ready-to-eat food
- Store cooked and raw food separately in the fridge.
- Store cooked food above raw meats to stop raw meat dripping onto the cooked food.
- Cover foods for storage.
- Defrost meats, chicken and fish thoroughly in the fridge before cooking.
- Reheat food to piping hot before being cooled for children.
- Make sure all meat, poultry, fish and eggs are cooked thoroughly. For meat, this is indicated by the juices running clear when you put a knife into the thickest part of the meat.
- Wash fruits and vegetables if being eaten raw.
- Cool leftovers quickly and put straight in the fridge once cooled. Rice can be rinsed in cold water to cool it quickly.
- Eat any leftovers within 2 days and don't reheat food more than once.
- Keep the temperature of your fridge at 4°C/40°F and your freezer at or below -18°C/0°F.
- Do not refreeze food which was frozen or has been partially or completely thawed (except frozen veg used in cooking).
- Don't give your family food past its "use by" date.
- Keep dried food in sealed containers and frozen food in airtight containers.
- Don't leave foods in the freezer too long. Use them in rotation and check the freezer manual to see how long each food can safely be frozen.
- Make sure everyone washes their hands before eating.
- Throw out any leftover food served to your baby at the end of a meal. The bacteria from your baby's saliva will be mixed into the food from the weaning spoon, and can grow in stored food.

## Further information

### Breastfeeding

**Local Support Groups/ Peer Support**  
West Lothian Infant Feeding Team  
01506 771743

**Association of Breastfeeding Mothers**  
Tel: 08444122 949  
[www.abm.me.uk](http://www.abm.me.uk)

**La Leche League**  
Tel: 020 7242 1278  
[www.laleche.org.uk](http://www.laleche.org.uk)

**The Breastfeeding Network**  
Tel: 0870 900 8787  
[www.breastfeeding.co.uk](http://www.breastfeeding.co.uk)

**National Childbirth Trust**  
**Breastfeeding phone line**  
0844 243 6129  
[www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)

### Healthy Start

Healthy Start vitamins for pregnant and breastfeeding women, and for children under four are available at your local pharmacy. These are at a low cost or free for families on certain benefits or a low income.

Families that qualify for free vitamins also get vouchers every week which can be swapped for milk, fresh or frozen fruit, fresh or frozen vegetables and infant formula milk. Ask your health visitor for more information or phone 0345 607 6823 for information and an application form. [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

### Fruit and Veg Access in West Lothian

Cyrenians are starting to offer stalls offering fruit and vegetables and other foods directly from their farm. These will be based in local community venues across West Lothian. They may also deliver to you if you place a bulk order with friends. The prices are usually less than the supermarkets, the products are local and the profits go back into the Cyrenians homelessness and addictions project work.

The first venue is Strathbrock Partnership Centre Broxburn (Tuesdays, 11 - 4pm).

For up to date information on venues, days and times contact:  
Rob Davidson, Farm Enterprise, 12 Humble Holdings  
Nr. Kirknewton, West Lothian EH27 8DS  
Tel: 0131 333 5202  
[www.cyrenians.scot](http://www.cyrenians.scot)



**Healthy Start Vouchers Accepted**

### Health information and advice

NHS 24 can help if your health visitor or doctor can't be contacted:  
[www.nhs24.com](http://www.nhs24.com)  
0845 4 24 24 24

## Useful Websites

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

Search for 'Fun first foods: An easy guide to introducing solid foods (Revised 2010)'.

[www.firststepsnutrition.org](http://www.firststepsnutrition.org)

Early years nutrition information including weaning, vegetarian and vegan diets, and allergies.

[www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)

Search for 'feeding your baby'.

[www.sja.org.uk/sja/first-aid-advice](http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/first-aid-advice)

More information on baby first aid.

N.B. Websites are for information only, provision of the links are not an endorsement.





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**Fiona Crookston**

**Lesley Bruce**

**Michelle Gapinski**

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