



Soaring Crane Natural Health Center

209 W Cedar Ave. Palmer, AK 99645. 907.745.3999. soaringcraneclinic.com
Amy E Chadwick, ND

Introducing Solid Foods

The most common question mothers ask is when do I give my baby solid food? The answer has varied from decade to decade, ranging from rice cereal at 6 weeks to no solid food for one year. Our belief is that your baby will tell you when they are ready for food.

Why is it important to wait before introducing solid foods?

Infants' digestive tracts are immature and develop slowly. A big change happens at approximately 6 months of age when digestive enzymes needed for the breakdown of different foods are now present. Also, IgA, a protective immune globulin, just begins to line the digestive tract at approximately 7 months of age. Before this happens the infant's digestive tract has no protection at all against allergenic substances. This is the reason for introducing hypoallergenic foods first.

Most importantly, pay attention to your child's cues. Unless there is a specific medical concern, there is no nutritional need to rush feeding your child solid foods. Your baby will know when the right time to eat comes, just as they know when to crawl, walk and talk.

The following behaviors from your baby may be indications that they are ready to try solid food:

Can they sit up by themselves?

- This is necessary for the swallowing mechanism of food versus milk

Are they showing interest in food?

- Often when babies are ready to eat they will grab at your food, imitate chewing motions and watch you carefully as you eat

Is your child getting teeth?

- Another sign of the body preparing for solid food

When you feed your child do they swallow or do they thrust the food back out with their tongue?

- The tongue thrusting reflex begins to diminish at age 6-7 months. It is a physical mechanism present in infants to prevent choking. If your child is spitting the food out, hold off for a little while and then try again.

The following is a guideline for introducing solid foods to your baby. It is important to begin with foods high in iron and carbohydrates, and easy on the baby's developing digestive and immune system.

It is important to introduce **one** new food at a time. Begin with one food and watch for any reactions, including but not limited to rashes, changes in bowel movements, changes in mood or behavior, redness around the anus, or stuffy nose. **If there is no reaction after 4-7 days, another food can be introduced. If there is a reaction, discontinue the new food and wait until the symptoms are gone before trying any other new foods.**

Do not introduce a new food if the baby is ill, has diarrhea, cramps or colic, or a skin or diaper rash. Try to introduce new foods when you are experiencing a normal home routine. Common allergens should be avoided for the first year. These include cow's milk, wheat, citrus, eggs, peanuts, and chocolate.



Soaring Crane Natural Health Center

209 W Cedar Ave. Palmer, AK 99645. 907.745.3999. soaringcraneclinic.com
Amy E Chadwick, ND

Six Months: 1-2 Tablespoons per day.

Hypoallergenic, pureed or cooked mashed foods containing iron.

spinach/leafy greens	carrots	blackberry	yam
cauliflower	apricot	sprouts (blend in water)	kiwi
pear	grapes	peach	cherry
artichoke	squash	homemade millet cereal	banana - ripe
brown rice cereal	broccoli	sprouts (blended in water)	prune
jerusalem artichoke			

Nine Months: 2-4 Tablespoons per day.

Foods high in zinc and supportive of the immune system. Be careful, some of these foods may be hard to digest. If so, wait a month and try again.

Cook all fruits and thoroughly cook cereals.

apples	black beans	black strap molasses	avocado
blueberry	cabbage	lima beans	coconut oil/milk
ground oatmeal	papaya	potato	nectarine
split pea soup	string bean	sweet potato	
ground moose meat	salmon*	egg yolk*	

Twelve Months: 4-10 Tablespoons/day

Foods high in zinc and fiber. Thoroughly cook cereals
4-10 Tablespoons per day.

acorn squash	asparagus	barley	chard
lentils	parsnip	tofu*	yogurt*
fish	peas	rice milk*	goat milk*

Eighteen Months:

Foods high in B vitamins and Calcium

beets	buckwheat	chicken	chicken
beet greens	kelp	lamb	rutabaga
rye	tahini	eggs*	turkey
beans			

Twenty-one Months:

Foods high in protein.

beef	eggplant	almond butter	sunflower seeds
beef liver	pineapple	orange	brewer's yeast
cornish hen	walnut	cashew butter	

After Twenty-Four Months:

tomato	corn	soy	wheat
duck	peanut butter	sunflower seeds	