

# STARTING SOLID FOODS

Everything you need to know to start feeding your baby solid food, in one place!

**When:**

Wait until your baby is about 6 months and meets all the developmental markers. Your baby has their whole life to eat, so seriously, wait!

## Developmental Markers:

- Sits up unassisted
- Doesn't thrust their tongue out when something is in their mouth
- Is interested in your food
- Puts toys and other objects in their mouth
- Has enough hand control to get things where they want them to go



**What:**

Think of your baby's meals in three parts. They need a high-calorie food, a high-iron food, and a fruit or vegetable at most meals. The foods should be smashable between your thumb and forefinger, and about 2 times the length of their fist so it is easy for them to grab.

### High-Calorie Ideas

- Avocadoes
- Fatty Fish like salmon
- Peanut Butter on Toast

### High-Iron Ideas

- Red Meat
- Beans (like black or pinto)
- Eggs

### Fruits/Veggies

- Carrots
- Sweet Potatoes
- Banana

## Where:

At this age, eating anywhere but at the table can be a big choking hazard. If you are out and about and don't have a high chair, have your baby sit in someone else's lap while you sit in front of them and watch for choking.

### Things you need to start:

- Highchair that baby can sit up straight in
- Bibs
- Mat (try a silicone one with a plate built in)
- Sippy cup for water
- Spoons for self-feeding



## How:

Eating for the first several weeks, and potentially months, is for skill building. Milk is still their primary source of nutrients. Do your best not to have an agenda about how much they will eat. Once they start actually eating the food, they might eat a lot one day and very little the next. It is normal! Continue to let them lead the way when it comes to food.

### Things to remember:

- How much your baby eats is not the important part
- Keep your cool! If you are anxious, your baby will be, too
- Be prepared for messes, don't try and prevent them or keep your baby clean

## Choking vs Gagging: Otherwise known as DON'T FREAK OUT!

Know the difference between choking and gagging. Gagging is very normal, and WILL happen. It is how your baby learns how to eat, how far back they should put food, and how much they can bite off. If you show you are worried when it happens, your baby will think it isn't normal and will be scared. So whatever you do, if your baby is just gagging and not choking, DO NOT REACT!