

# Introducing Foods and Allergy Prevention Fast Facts



Visit [www.allergy.org.au/patients/allergy-prevention](http://www.allergy.org.au/patients/allergy-prevention)  
for free resources about allergy prevention,  
including how to introduce solid foods to babies.

  
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# Fast Facts

## Introducing Foods and Allergy Prevention

- 1** Solid foods can be introduced to your baby around six months of age (not before four months), and when your baby is ready. If possible, breastfeed your baby while you are giving them solid foods. This advice is for all babies, even if they have severe eczema and/or food allergy, or if a parent or sibling has allergies.
- 2** Studies show that introducing common allergy causing foods by 12 months of age may reduce the chance of babies developing food allergy. These foods include egg, peanut, cow's milk (dairy), tree nuts, soy, sesame, wheat, fish and other seafood.
- 3** Solid foods should be in a form suited for your baby's age, such as small amounts of well cooked egg and smooth peanut butter/paste. Giving new solid foods in the day rather than at night allows you to watch your baby and respond if they have an allergic reaction.
- 4** You can rub a small amount of food inside your baby's lip to start with. If there is no allergic reaction after a few minutes, start giving small amounts of the food. Never smear or rub food on your baby's skin, as this will not help to identify possible food allergies.
- 5** If you need guidance, mix a small amount ( $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon) of hard-boiled egg or smooth peanut butter/paste into your baby's usual food (such as vegetable puree). If there is no allergic reaction, gradually increase the amount, such as  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon the next time.
- 6** Continue to give the foods to your baby regularly (twice weekly), as part of a varied diet, to maintain tolerance. Trying a food and then not giving it regularly may result in food allergy development.
- 7** Even if you follow this advice some babies may still develop a food allergy. If your baby has an allergic reaction (which mostly occur within minutes), stop giving that food and seek advice from your doctor.
- 8** If your baby already has food allergies, see your doctor for advice, testing, treatment and an action plan. Babies with cow's milk, wheat or multiple food allergies should also be seen by a dietitian to help maintain healthy food intake. Avoiding these foods can affect your baby's growth and development.

**More information:** [www.allergy.org.au/patients/allergy-prevention](http://www.allergy.org.au/patients/allergy-prevention)

**Other Fast Facts:** [www.allergy.org.au/patients/fast-facts](http://www.allergy.org.au/patients/fast-facts)

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