

Is it too soon for solid foods?



Solid foods are any foods other than breastmilk or formula, like infant cereal, baby food, or table food mashed up. There are 5 common signs that babies show when they are ready to start solid foods. Most babies show all of these signs around six months old.



How do you know when your baby is ready for solid foods?

Babies who are ready to start solid foods show **all 5** of these signs.



"I can sit up and hold my head steady."



"I put fingers or toys in my mouth."



"I am interested in what you are eating."



"I open wide."



"I can keep food in my mouth and swallow it. I do not push it out with my tongue."



Most babies typically show all 5 signs around six months. Health experts recommend starting solid foods at this time. **Wait for your baby to show all 5 signs** before starting any solid foods.





Why wait until your baby shows all 5 signs?

Feeding solid foods to babies before they are ready may cause:

- ☐ Constipation
- ☐ Diarrhea
- ☐ Gas
- ☐ Choking
- ☐ Breathing illnesses
- ☐ Gaining weight too fast

Mark the ones that worry you.



What have you heard about putting infant cereal in the bottle?

A lot of parents get advice to put solid foods, like infant cereal, in the bottle to help babies sleep longer. **Health experts recommend only breastmilk or formula be given in the bottle.**

Babies at this age wake up naturally during the night. The list below shows common reasons why. Mark the reasons that your baby may wake up.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Diaper | <input type="radio"/> Teething |
| <input type="radio"/> Too hot or too cold | <input type="radio"/> Lights or sounds |
| <input type="radio"/> Learning new skills (such as rolling over) | <input type="radio"/> Growth spurts |
| <input type="radio"/> Change in routine | <input type="radio"/> It just happens |

Growth spurts

Babies grow quickly during a growth spurt. Your baby may be hungrier and wake up more often at night. **Breastmilk or formula is still the only food your baby needs during this time.** Feed your baby when you see hunger cues. There is no need to start solid foods. Growth spurts usually last a few days.



Tips to simplify your life

It is natural for babies to wake up often and for parents to want more sleep. Here are some tips that may help you simplify your life and get more rest. Mark all the ones you would like to try:

- ☐ Keep healthy grab-and-go snacks, like nuts, cheese sticks, cereal, fruits and vegetables.
- ☐ Make simple meals. Use leftovers the next day.
- ☐ Create a routine for mealtime, playtime, and bedtime.
- ☐ Clean one small area of your home at a time.
- ☐ Ask for help with laundry and folding.
- ☐ Set up play dates for your older children.
- ☐ Rest during night feeds. Dim the lights and get comfortable.
- ☐ Keep your baby close at night. Put your baby's crib in the same room.



Every baby is different. Watch your baby for **all 5 signs** and mark them off as you see them.



"I can sit up and hold my head steady."



"I put fingers or toys in my mouth."



"I am interested in what you are eating."



"I open wide."



"I can keep food in my mouth and do not push it out with my tongue."



California Department of Public Health, California WIC Program
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

1-800-852-5770 #940231 08/17

