

Making Food for Your Baby

Your baby doesn't need special foods. Feed your baby what you and your family eat. You might just need to change the texture to make it safe for your baby to chew and swallow.



Steps to make food for your baby

Fully cook

- eggs
- fish, shellfish
- meat, poultry
- hard foods until soft or tender

Remove

- tough skins, peels
- pits
- large seeds
- bones
- tendons

Add moisture

- breastmilk
- formula
- water
- milk or yogurt
- sauces

Add flavour

You can add herbs and spices or offer plain versions of foods. It's up to you!

To help your baby accept more foods as they get older, offer different flavours like:

<p>Bitter broccoli</p> 	<p>Sour yogurt</p> 	<p>Savory meat</p> 
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Limit sugar and salt

Choose and prepare foods with little to no added salt or sugar.

Babies naturally like sweet and salty tastes, so they don't need to learn to like them.

Too much sugar or salt over time is not good for your baby's health.

Change the texture to match your baby's ability to chew and swallow

It is usually easiest for babies to start with a pureed or mashed texture.



















Gradually add thicker, lumpier textures, and soft pieces of food.

<p>Blend Pureed</p> 	<p>Squash Mashed</p> 	<p>Grind/Shred Minced & moist</p> 	<p>Cut/Slice Soft/tender pieces</p> 
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Foods in different textures

Every baby is different and will add new textures at their own rate.

This list shows only a few food examples – offer your baby lots of different foods!

	Pureed or mashed	Minced & moist	Soft & tender pieces
<p>Animal proteins meat fish, shellfish poultry eggs</p>	 <p>pureed fish</p>	 <p>flaked fish</p>	 <p>fish cakes</p>
<p>yogurt, cheese milk in baking or cooking</p>	 <p>plain yogurt</p>	 <p>cottage cheese</p>	 <p>shredded cheese</p>
<p>Plant-based proteins beans lentils nuts and seeds</p>	 <p>pureed beans or hummus</p>	 <p>minced lentils or beans with sauce</p>	 <p>lentil or bean stew</p>
<p>Vegetables fresh frozen canned</p>	 <p>pureed zucchini</p>	 <p>grated zucchini</p>	 <p>zucchini sticks</p>
<p>Fruits fresh frozen canned</p>	 <p>pureed peach cup</p>	 <p>diced peaches</p>	 <p>cut up peaches</p>
<p>Grain foods baby cereals with iron breads and pancakes cooked grains hot cereal pasta muffins soft crackers</p>	 <p>baby cereals with iron</p>	 <p>pancake strips made with baby cereal</p>	 <p>muffin made with baby cereal</p>

By 9 months old, most babies will be able to eat pureed, mashed, minced & moist, and soft pieces of food. Babies will learn to pick up and feed themselves bite-sized, slices and strips of food.

Dissolve or melt in mouth

Dissolvable foods dissolve or melt with very little chewing. This texture can help babies build their chewing skills. These foods do not have much nutrition, so make sure to offer with other foods.

Grain foods

puffed cereal
cold cereal
rusks or wafers



puffed wheat



oat cereal o's



rusks

Mixed dishes and meal examples

Keep adding to the variety of foods, textures, and flavours you offer to your baby. If you can easily squish a food with a fork, your baby can safely mash the food with their gums.



Yogurt
Strawberries
Bulgar & bean salad
corn, pepper, onion
bulgur
black & green beans



Rice
Stir-fry
chicken
carrot, pepper,
onion



Chili
ground beef
beans
corn, onions, peppers
crushed tomatoes



Lentil dahl
red lentils
diced tomatoes
onion
herbs & spices

Foods in the “baby food” aisle

Foods marketed for babies are also options for your baby.

Most of these products are a pureed texture. Make sure to also offer other textures.

Serve store-bought foods in a bowl or on a spoon.

This helps your baby:

- practice eating from a spoon
- use their senses to see, smell and touch the food



Use caution

Sugar substitutes like aspartame, stevia, or sucralose, do not offer any nutrients. There is little information on their safety before 12 months.

Arsenic is a natural element found in some foods such as rice and rice products. Too much arsenic might be harmful to babies. To reduce the amount of arsenic your baby gets, rinse rice and cook rice with extra water. Drain extra cooking water before serving.

You can give your baby rice cereal and other rice products, but make sure it is not the only grain offered.

Do not give your baby

Foods that can contain bacteria that could make your baby sick. For more information see: [HealthyCanadians.gc.ca/foodsafety](https://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/foodsafety)

Honey in any form (pasteurized, unpasteurized, cooked, baked, or as an ingredient in other foods). Honey before 12 months can cause food poisoning (botulism).

Choking hazards like small and round foods such as whole grapes and whole nuts. Always watch your baby when they are eating.

For more information



- Talk to your healthcare team.
- Call Health Link at 811 and ask to talk to a dietitian or complete a [self-referral form](#) on ahs.ca/811.
- Visit ahs.ca/nutrition.
- Visit www.healthyparentshealthychildren.ca and search “feeding your baby.”