

Finger Foods

Good health depends on good eating habits. What your child eats and how he or she eats begins in the earliest years. Your child develops tastes during the first few years that will carry on through later life.

Finger foods should be introduced when your child's hand-eye coordination matures to the point of being able to pick up objects and get them to his or her mouth. At approximately 7-8 months, when your child is able to sit in a high chair and can reach for objects, a graham cracker or a few Cheerios or a piece of soft cheese will be of great interest. If you allow your baby to experiment with food (despite the mess), you will have fewer problems in the long run. The more you allow your child to do, the faster he or she will learn. Don't be surprised if you need two spoons per meal – one for your child and one for you!

NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12-18 MONTHS:

Excess Sugar

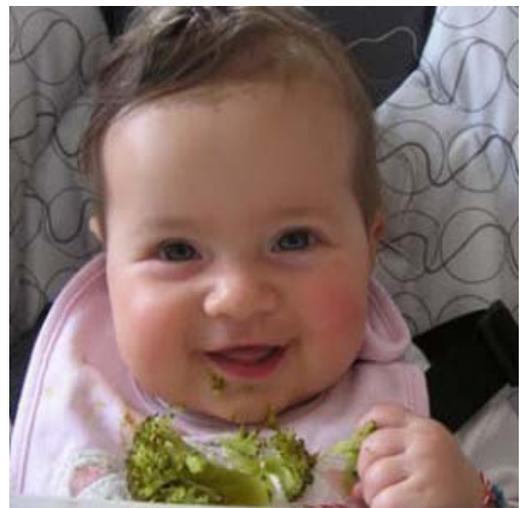
Juice (Keep under 4-6 oz. daily)
Pop/Soda
Kool-Aid®
Hi-C®
Cake
Candy
Ice Cream
Cookies
Jelly, jam
Donuts

Choking Danger

Peanut Butter
Nuts
Popcorn
Raisins
Olives
Hard candies
Raw vegetables
Whole grapes
Chips
Hot dogs
Candy
Gum

FOODS FOR BABIES (7-8 MONTHS)

Mashed bananas or small slices
Canned pears and peaches (in juice or water)
Cooked cereals
Cheerios
Toast, lightly buttered – cut in strips or small pieces
Graham crackers (not with honey)
Arrowroot cookies
Mashed potato
Soft-cooked vegetables, mashed
Cottage cheese
Yogurt
Pudding
Tender meat, mashed or chopped
Ground meat



FOODS FOR BABIES 8-12 MONTHS

Offer foods that the child may pick up. Texture becomes of great interest at this point.

Apple peeled and cut into eighths, or grated with cheese grater
Mashed banana, kiwi, or mango
Peaches, ripe and peeled
Egg, boiled, scrambled or poached
Cheeses, soft
Soft custards
Crackers
Dry cereal
Macaroni pasta
Egg noodles
Rice
Toast
Bagel
Tender meats; lamb, veal, and some beef
Fish, without bones
Soft cooked pieces of chicken
Chopped, cooked vegetables – carrots, green beans, broccoli, sweet potato
Peas
Mashed, cooked dried beans
Strips of bread, toast, tortilla



Babies with 2-4 teeth are more receptive to lumpier foods. Regardless of age, babies do not need teeth to chew. Gums do an adequate job on soft foods. More chewy fruits and vegetables should be added as more teeth erupt. It is easy to drift into the habit of serving only soft fruits and vegetables and to perpetuate such practices as peeling apples, but it is wise to gradually increase the chewy foods as the chewing ability increases.

FINGER FOODS APPROPRIATE FOR BABIES ONE YEAR AND OLDER

Vegetables

Cauliflower, cooked
Cherry tomatoes, halved
Tomatoes, peeled
Mushrooms
Lettuce, cut up
Avocado, ripe
Asparagus tips, cooked
Broccoli tips, cooked
Green beans, cooked
Cooked sweet potato
Mashed potatoes
Peas (uncooked, frozen ones, too!)
Celery, with all strands removed

Dairy/Eggs

Small squares of soft cheese, American, Colby, etc.
Hard-cooked eggs – chopped
Cottage cheese (add fruit, fresh or canned, for interest)
Yogurt (may be served semi-frozen)



FOR BABIES ONE YEAR AND OLDER (cont.)

Fruit

Apples, thinly sliced
 Pears, thinly sliced
 Peaches, fresh, frozen or canned in own juice
 Navel oranges, peeled and sectioned
 Mandarin oranges, canned
 Fruit cocktail
 Fresh berries
 Strawberries, halved
 Grapes, halved for young toddlers
 Sweet cherries, pitted
 Blueberries
 Watermelon, pitted and cut into bite-sized pieces
 Cantaloupe, cut into bite-sized pieces
 Banana, whole or cut into thirds
 Dried fruits
 Kiwi, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces



Meats/Protein

Small meatballs
 Tender roasts (may grind)
 Hamburger (try it in different shapes, such as sticks)
 Chicken or turkey, diced
 Ground turkey, cooked like hamburger
 Tofu, firm or extra firm, cut into cubes

Breads, Cereals, whole grain when available

Crackers, noodles
 Lightly buttered toast, cut into fourths
 Arrowroot cookies
 Zwieback
 Saltines
 Triscuits®
 Pretzel rods
 Oyster crackers
 Graham crackers
 Bagel and cream cheese
 Cold cereals** (dry or with milk)
 Hot cereals (regular or instant)
 Cooked macaroni (a variety of shapes)
 Cooked spaghetti
 Brown rice

**Avoid those that are sugar-frosted, honey-coated, or chocolate-flavored. Read labels for sugar – under 6 grams for a serving recommended.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (25g)	
Servings Per Container 10	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 97	Calories from Fat 16
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 231mg	10%
Total Carbohydrate 18g	6%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 4g	
Vitamin A 22%	• Vitamin C 22%
Calcium 4%	• Iron 55%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your caloric needs.

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