Cannizzaro Integrative Pediatric Center

WHEN TO START SOLIDS

The American Academy of Pediatrics says you should start your child on solids between 4 and 6 months, but the answer really depends on your baby and when they are ready. Here are some signs that your little one may be ready for baby food:

- Can sit upright and hold up their head.
- Curious, looking at everything around them—especially what you're eating!
- Has lost the tongue thrust reflex that automatically pushes food out of their mouth.
- Still seems hungry after getting a full day's portion of milk (8 to 10 breast feedings or about 32 ounces of formula).

HOW TO START SOLIDS

- Nurse your baby before offering other foods. Your milk remains the single most important food in your baby's diet until their first birthday. Additionally, your baby is more likely to show interest in new foods if they are not ravenously hungry. At this age, other foods are more for experimentation, play, and fun. Remember to offer to nurse again after the solid "meal."

- Offer food when the baby is in the mood to learn. This could be during a quiet time, or it could be at a social time when the rest of the family is also eating.

- Offer small amounts of food (1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon). Your baby is learning to eat and enjoy new textures, rather than having a full meal. Gradually increase the amount of food and the frequency of feeding to satisfy your baby's hunger and interest.

- If your baby does not seem to like a new food, offer it again at another time. It may take several times before they learn to enjoy a new flavor.

- Never leave a baby or young child alone with food in case they begin to choke. Never give your baby small, hard foods like peanuts or popcorn. Foods that are circular in shape such as carrots or grapes should be sliced and then halved or quartered.

- **Use only single ingredients and wait about a week between introducing each new food**. Then, if something upsets your baby, you will know exactly what it was. Some signs of a possible allergic reaction include a rash, runny nose, or sore bottom. If you see any of these signs, wait a week and try the food again. If you get the same reaction, hold off until your baby is a year old and try again.

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FOODS TO INTRODUCE

(This is an idea list. You can introduce other food items not listed.)

6 Months		18 Months	
Banana Cherries Prunes Blackberries Carrots (cooked or mashed) Sprouts Broccoli	Applesauce Grapes Yams Pears Cauliflower Carrots	Kelp Beet and beet greens Chard Beans Eggplant Lamb	Chicken Other greens (lettuce, mustards, etc.) Rye Tahini Goat milk yogurt Garbanzo beans
9 Months		**21 Months**	
Lima Beans Split Peas Potato (cooked or mashed) Basmati Rice Brown Rice Artichoke	Cabbage Millet String Beans Papaya Nectarine Blueberries (help teething)	Beef liver Salmon Orange Turkey Pineapple Brewer's Yeast	
12 Months		**2-3 Years**	
Squash Tofu Asparagus Avocado Barley	Swiss Chard Parsnips Blackstrap Molasses Yogurt (if no reaction) Goat's Milk (fresh)	Sunflower seeds Lentils Cottage Cheese Hard Cheese Corn (if no reaction)	