

## MOVING ONTO FAMILY MEALS

### Stage 3 Lumps, Chopped Foods and Finger Foods

Your baby will now be taking a wide variety of flavours and textures of food. Your baby should be eating mostly the same foods as the rest of the family. Try and eat together as a family. At about the ages of 9 months to 1 year your baby will develop further the ability to chew, even if the teeth haven't come through yet. Continue to offer foods with a lumpy texture and finger foods.

When introducing coarser foods it is a good idea to use a food that is already enjoyed. Try mixing a little of the coarser food into the normal minced or mashed food when you first try. Gradually you will be able to increase the chopped food and reduce the minced or mashed food.

You can still cook and freeze baby's meals for convenience.

#### **REGULAR MEALS**

Your baby should always be encouraged to take three (or four) regular meals. Offering fatty snacks and sweet foods, such as crisps, sweets and chocolate, between meals can spoil your baby's appetite. These are much better as a treat. However, unsweetened drinks may be given when required. These should be taken from a cup at this stage. If your baby does become hungry between meals, offer the following snacks:-

Piece of fruit or vegetable

Fingers of bread or toast with savoury topping

Savoury or plain biscuit, e.g. cracker, digestive, breadstick, rich tea biscuit.....

½ Bread muffin or teacake, malt loaf, or fingers of pitta bread, or rice cakes

#### **MILK**

Continue with breast or formula milk until your baby is at least 1 year of age. Whole cow's milk can be used in cooking, e.g. in custard, sauces and with cereals.

Whole cow's milk can be used as main drink after 1 year of age. From 1 until 5 years of age, one pint of milk daily should be encouraged. This includes milk used on cereals, in cooking and foods made from milk e.g. milk puddings, custard, yogurt, fromage frais, cheese and sauces. Lower fat milk can be used in cooking after 1 year, but not as a main drink. Semi-skimmed milk can be used as a main drink after 2 years as long as your child is growing well and eats a wide variety of foods. Skimmed milk should not be used before the age of 5 years.

#### **EGGS**

All eggs should be well cooked until the white and yolk are solid for infants under 1 year of age, due to the risk of salmonella food poisoning. Dishes which contain raw, uncooked or partially cooked egg, should be avoided until 1 year of age.

#### **CHEESE**

Hard cheese (e.g. Cheddar) can be cubed or grated and used as a "finger food" or in sauces.

#### **SPREADS**

Use small amounts of butter or margarine, e.g. on bread/toast.

**NUTS**

Whole nuts should not be given to children until 5 years of age because of the risk of choking. Finely ground nuts (i.e. smooth peanut or other nut butters) can be used from 6 months (26 weeks) of age. If your baby has known allergies, such as eczema, asthma, hayfever and rhinitis, or there is a family history of allergy, then all nuts should be avoided until 3 years of age.

**SALT**

Salt and salty foods e.g. stock cubes, yeast extract, should only be added to food in small and weak amounts, e.g. very diluted. Try and discourage crisps and other salty snacks.

**SUGAR**

Sugar should not be added to food except tart/sour fruit e.g. stewed cooking apple, as this may cause tooth decay and cause your child to become overweight.

**STARCHY FOODS**

Encourage wholewheat products e.g. bread, cereal and discourage foods with added sugar (biscuits, cakes etc.)

**FRUIT AND VEGETABLES**

Use fruit and vegetables five times in a day.

**VITAMINS**

From 6 months (26 weeks) onwards vitamin drops should be given to:-

- breast fed babies
- bottle fed babies if the amount of formula taken is less than 500mls (17fl.oz) per day

Your health visitor can give you more information on the use of vitamin drops.

**FEEDING THEMSELVES**

As babies begin to take more lumpy and finger foods they may want to feed themselves. Let them try by giving them a spoon whilst you are feeding them. Their skills in using the spoon will probably take quite some time to develop. Also continue to provide finger foods. If you are worried about mess, cover the floor below baby's highchair.

**USING A CUP**

At this stage you can try offering drinks from a cup at lunchtime and between meals. Use a beaker with a spout and two firm handles and introduce to your baby gradually. Use unsweetened orange juice with meals, especially if diet is meat free. Fruit juice should be diluted 1 part fruit juice to 6 parts water. Aim for about 4-6 small cups of drink a day.

By this stage, your baby's diet should be becoming mixed, varied and more like your family meals. Your baby should be encouraged to take lumpy foods of different textures.

**USING WHOLEMEAL FOODS**

Wholemeal bread and wholegrain cereals are essential in a well balanced diet. These foods should be encouraged. Your baby can be given these but take care to choose a fine textured wholemeal bread. Weetabix is best offered mixed with porridge or Ready Brek.

**REMEMBER:**

**NEVER LEAVE BABIES ALONE  
WHILE THEY ARE TRYING HARD  
FOODS OR FEEDING THEMSELVES**

## **SUGGESTED MEAL PLAN FOR A 9 MONTH OLD UP TO 1 YEAR OLD INFANT**

### **Breakfast**

Cereal - porridge or Weetabix or Readybrek with full fat cow's milk  
or

Egg (hard boiled, poached or scrambled)  
(Egg must be cooked until yolk is hard) with a finger of wholemeal toast

Cup or beaker of formula milk or breast feed

### **Dinner**

Minced or chopped meat or fish or pulses  
Mashed or chopped vegetables  
Mashed potatoes or rice or pasta

Chopped soft fresh or stewed fruit, fromage frais, full fat yogurt or milky pudding

Cup or beaker of diluted pure unsweetened fruit juice or water

### **Tea**

Savoury dish:- meat dish, fish dish, egg dish, cheese dish (grated mild cheese or cottage cheese) or vegetable dish or pulse dish  
Fingers of bread or chapatti

Chopped soft fresh fruit

Breast feed or cup or beaker of formula milk

### **Bedtime**

Breast or bottle feed

## ***IN CONCLUSION - for 9 months up to 1 year***

Practical tips to note at this age:

- Food should be now be finely chopped.
- Homemade or low sugar rusks are useful finger foods. See how to make homemade rusks in Mealtimes Become More Important.  
Also use fingers of fruit, vegetables, toast.
- Use a feeding beaker or cup for drinks.
- Use family foods without sugar and salt.
- A small amount of mild spices, e.g. coriander and cumin, can be used in baby's food.
- Remember vitamin drops.
- Remember to include iron rich foods in your baby's menu.

e.g.            meat  
                  hard cooked egg  
                  beans and pulses  
                  dark green leafy vegetables  
                  fortified breakfast cereals e.g. Weetabix

### **SUGGESTED PLAN FROM 1 YEAR ONWARDS**

#### **Breakfast**

Cereal or porridge with milk  
 Piece of wholemeal toast  
 Diluted unsweetened fruit juice

#### **Mid-morning**

Milk or water

#### **Lunch**

Meat, fish, egg or cheese dish or pulse dish  
 Vegetables  
 Potato or bread or rice or pasta or chapatti  
 Fresh fruit, yogurt, fromage frais, milk pudding, stewed fruit and custard  
 Diluted pure unsweetened fruit juice or water

#### **Mid-afternoon**

Water or fresh fruit

#### **Tea time**

Finger foods - fingers of toast with savoury topping or baked beans or sandwiches  
 or pieces of cheese, tomato with bread  
 Pudding as lunchtime  
 Cup of milk

#### **Bedtime**

Cup of milk

### ***IN CONCLUSION - from 1 year onwards***

Points to note:

- Your child should now be **eating with the family**.
- Stick to **savoury snacks** - vegetables, crackers, plain biscuits, toast or bread, pitta bread, pieces of fruit, teacakes, bread muffins, malt loaf.
- Discourage high fat foods like crisps, pastry.
- Diluted fruit juice or water for drinks.
- Encourage unsweetened fruit if vegetables are rejected.
- Remember young children need approximately 1 pint whole milk daily.
- Remember vitamin drops.
- Liver paté and soft cheese, e.g. Brie, Camembert, may be taken after 1 year of age.

**DRINKS**

As your child reaches 1 year, sugar-containing drinks should still be confined to mealtimes. All drinks should be used as dilute as possible.

From 1 year of age, feeding from a bottle should be strongly discouraged. By the time a child is taking a mixture of foods, cups or beakers should be used for drinks.

**VITAMINS**

It is recommended that all babies are given vitamin drops from 1 year of age and preferably up to 5 years. Other vitamin preparations, e.g. tablets, should not be used unless under medical supervision.