

# Having fun with solid food



HEALTHY  
START

HS10512MNTHS

# Getting started on healthy food

It's a special time when your baby starts eating solid food – we've got lots of tips to help make this a fun adventure!

## When should I start feeding my baby solid foods?

Not all babies develop at the same pace, but most should be ready to start trying solid foods at around six months. Until then, breast milk or infant formula milk will provide all the calories and nourishment your baby needs.



## What if my baby seems to be getting very hungry before six months?

A young baby's digestive system simply isn't ready for solid foods until around the six-month mark. Try and give your baby extra milk feeds and ask your health visitor for more advice.

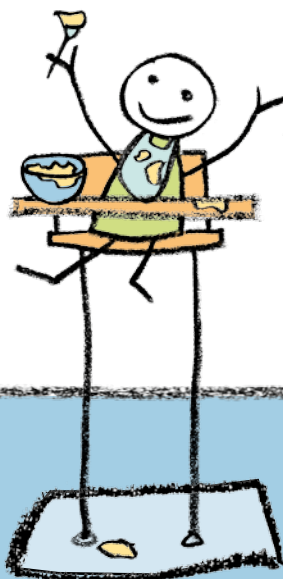
## What should I feed my baby?

Start with mashed cooked vegetables (such as parsnip, potato, yam, sweet potato or carrot), mashed banana, avocado, pear or cooked apple, and any baby fist-sized pieces of soft fruit or veg. You can also try cereals such as baby rice mixed with their usual milk – either breast milk or infant formula milk.



## How will I know when my baby has had enough?

Most babies turn their heads away, spit their food out or keep their mouths shut when they've had enough to eat.



# Top tips for happy meal times

- Have your baby sitting up straight and facing forward. Go at your baby's pace – don't rush.
- Introduce them to a range of textures – mashed veg, soft fruit like banana and cooked carrot sticks are all good to try.
- Let your baby touch and smell the food. It will help them learn about what they're eating – it's good for them to try and feed themselves.
- Never leave your baby alone when they are eating as they could choke.

## Don't forget

Your baby will still need breast milk or infant formula milk until they are at least a year old. Both provide important vitamins, nutrients, iron and protein in an easy-to-digest form. You can use cow's milk when cooking for your baby but they shouldn't have it as a drink before they are 12 months old.

Your baby should take Healthy Start children's vitamin drops from six months or when they are drinking less than 500ml (a pint) of formula a day.

## Fun baby meal ideas

- Mashed banana on toast fingers
- Porridge mixed with whole cow's milk or your baby's usual milk (breast milk or infant formula) and mashed ripe pear
- Cooked sweet potato with mashed chickpeas and cauliflower.



## Should my baby start having follow-on formula?

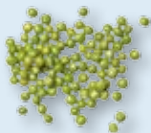
Lots of follow-on formula milks are available for babies, six months and older. However, you don't need to change over to these. Keep feeding your baby breast milk or infant formula, alongside a variety of solid foods until they are one year old – then they can have whole cow's milk as a drink. Remember, you **can't use your Healthy Start vouchers to buy follow-on formula.**

## What's good to buy now and what's coming into season next?

Get ahead of Mother Nature with our handy guide to what fruit and veg is in season:

### May/June

Strawberries, peas, spinach, spring onions, Savoy cabbage, broccoli



## Next issue – what you really think about Healthy Start

We asked you all the things you like (and don't like!) about Healthy Start. In next month's issue we'll reveal all!

[www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

0845 607 6823 (local call rate from BT landlines)

If your circumstances change (for example, if you move home), remember to tell HMRC Tax Credits or JobCentre Plus straightaway. That way, you'll keep getting the right amount of Healthy Start vouchers.