Some extras Tips !!

The appetite of children can vary greatly from day to day, particularly from the age of one onwards. Here are some tips and guidelines to help out.

Parents decide what and when children will eat, children decide how much they will eat.

If your child is not hungry at meal time it may be because they like to eat many small meals during the day, try offering a snack every 2 hours.

Beware of children drinking too much milk, sweet drinks or juices between meals, this can reduce their appetite and lead to fussy eating and fights at meal times.

Keep offering new foods that your baby may have not eaten before. It can take up to 10 attempts to get babies to eat new foods. However, never force feed your baby.

Encourage children to try new foods and congratulate their efforts.

ALWAYS SUPERVISE BABY WHEN EATING

First foods for babies

This brochure was produced as part of the "Food for Everybody" project in conjunction with the Maternal Child Health team of the City of Greater Dandenong.

Images provided courtesy of Meat & Livestock Australia

From Breast or Bottle to Cup and Spoon
**SMOOTH FOODS (finely mashed)**

1-3 teaspoons, 1-2 meals

*Around 6 months*

- Breast milk or formula is all that baby needs until about 6 months of age and is still most important. Give spoon feeds after the milk feed.
- Start one new food at a time and give for 3-5 days before starting a new food. This way you know if your baby has a reaction to the food.
- Do not add salt, sugar or honey to food.

Some recommended first foods are:
- Rice cereal - mix with breast milk, formula or cooled, boiled water. It has added iron and has a low risk for allergy.

**Smooth/finely mashed** Vegetables eg. carrots, potato, pumpkin, sweet potato, broccoli, zucchini

**Smooth/finely mashed** fruits eg. Banana, (ripe) Cooked apple or pear, rock melon, avocado

---

**LUMPY FOODS (Mashed/Minced)**

Half a cup, 2-3 meals

*Around 7-9 months*

Baby is ready to try food with small, soft lumps and finely chopped foods. This encourages the baby to learn how to chew.

**Meats and alternatives** - beef, lamb, pork, chicken, fish, liver, beans, lentils. It is important to give iron-rich foods for strong development.

**Cereal foods** - noodles, rice, pasta, bread, breakfast cereals like weetbix, rice congee, rolled oats or semolina (porridge)

**Dairy foods** - cheese, natural yoghurt, custard

**Fruit and Vegetables** - soft cooked vegetables, such as cauliflower, parsnip, carrot, spinach, peas.

Baby should start drinking tap water from a cup. Fruit juices are not recommended as they are high in sugar and can damage growing teeth.

If there is a strong family history of allergy, dairy, fish and wheat based cereal - should be delayed till 12 months.

---

**FINGER FOODS (chopped)**

Between 9-12 months, 3 meals

- Encourage the baby to feed themselves, offer a spoon and to eat with the whole family.
- The baby can have 3-4 breast milk or formula feeds a day, usually after food.
- Cow’s milk can be added to milk puddings and custard, and then in a cup from 12 months.
- Introduce egg and then foods with egg. Start with a small amount, 1/2 teaspoon of soft cooked yolk, slowly increase until the whole yolk is eaten, then repeat with egg white. Reaction to eggs can be a rash or swelling around the mouth, stop egg and contact your doctor for advice.
- Honey should not be given to children before 12 months, it can contain bacteria which may make baby unwell.

Around 12 months baby should be drinking all drinks from a cup (no more bottles as this can cause harm to new teeth) and eating the same foods as the rest of the family.