

# First Foods For Baby

## Is My Baby Ready?

At 4-6 months of age, your baby may show signs that he is ready to start spoon-fed strained foods. These signs include good head control and showing interest in eating by watching others when they eat. If your baby isn't showing any signs, wait a few more weeks. Contact your Pediatrician or Dietitian with any concerns. Avoid feeding baby solid foods before 4 months of age as his digestive tract will not be mature enough to digest and absorb these foods properly.

## Getting Started

Be sure your baby is sitting well-supported in a comfortable chair. Choose a small spoon with a shallow bowl that fits the size of your child's mouth. Start with small bites of infant rice cereal mixed with breastmilk or infant formula to a thin consistency. You should always be at eye level with your baby while spoonfeeding him. Don't force your baby to look up at you as this makes swallowing more difficult. Always watch your baby's cues. Signs that he is ready to continue include looking at you or opening his mouth for the next bite. If he turns away from the spoon or continues to spit out even the smallest bites of food, he may not be ready for spoon-feeding yet. Wait a few more weeks and try again.

## What's Next?

Always wait 3-5 days before introducing any new foods to your baby. Signs of food intolerance include skin rash, diarrhea, or vomiting. If any of these symptoms appear, stop the new food and wait 1-2 months to reintroduce it. Start with a variety of single grain infant cereals, then move on to strained vegetables and strained fruits. If you would like to try homemade baby foods, be sure to puree them to a smooth consistency at first. Be sure to offer your baby a wide variety of smooth foods before advancing to lumpy textured foods. It will be easier for your baby to accept new textures if the tastes are already familiar to him. If your baby is at least 8 months of age and tolerates thicker smooth baby foods (for example, mashed potatoes or strained peas), then he may be ready to try lumpier textured foods (see "Textured Foods For Baby").

## Recipes

### Apple Pumpkin Cereal

1 T. unsweetened applesauce  
2 T. canned pumpkin  
3 T. infant oatmeal cereal  
3 T. infant formula or breastmilk  
Pour ingredients into bowl.  
Stir well with spoon.

### Baby Avocado

1 T. ripe avocado  
1 dash of lemon juice  
1 ½ T. infant oatmeal cereal  
2 T. infant formula/breastmilk  
Peel and fork-mash avocado.  
Pour all ingredients into bowl.  
Stir well with fork/wire whisk.