

# Medi Quest BRS Hospital

A monthly News letter from BRS Hospital

## FEEDING TIPS FOR BABIES FROM BIRTH TO TWO YEARS

**Dr. S.Ramesh M.D, D.C.H.**

Pediatrician and Neonatologist

BRS HOSPITAL CHENNAI

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Editors

**Dr.B.Madhusudhan,**  
MS.MCh.,DNB(Plastic)

**Dr.S.Ramesh,MD,DCh**

28,Cathedral garden Rd,  
Nungambakkam,  
Chennai - 600 034.

Phone:  
044 - 30414250  
044 - 30414230

Email:  
[brsmadhu@yahoo.co.in](mailto:brsmadhu@yahoo.co.in)  
Web:  
[www.brshospital.com](http://www.brshospital.com)

One of the most common queries a Pediatrician faces from the mothers are “what do I feed my baby”. **While the guidelines are very clear for the first six months of life , after this period confusion and anxiety prevails in the mother of infants especially first time mothers. This article attempts to throw some light on this issue.**

### **0-6 months**

Exclusive breast feeds for 6 months is advocated by the WHO ( World Health Organisation)and endorsed by the Indian Academy of Pediatrics. Baby must be breast fed as soon as possible after birth to get colostrum. Colostrum is the breastmilk produced in the first few days after delivery, even though the quantity is small it is sufficient for the new born baby, in addition it is rich in antibodies and immunoglobulins which help the newborn baby fight infections. Babies born of caesarean section can be breast fed within 6 hours, after delivery, as soon as the mother has recovered from the fatigue. A child can be breast fed up to 2 yrs of age (WHO). It is clear that milk is the only food for

babies under six months , in some instances in this period of six months breast milk may be inadequate , in such circumstances formula milk can be used . Avoid cow's milk or Aavin milk for the young infants , as they contain higher amounts of protein , and salt which is not suitable for babies under one year of age. Consult your doctor before commencing formula feeds to obtain advice regarding the correct preparation and method of giving the formula feeds. If a baby needs formula feeds avoid the bottle and give through spoon or paladai. This method may be messy and cumbersome but scores in safety against infections.

### **6months to 9months**

#### **Weaning Vs Complementary feeding**

Until recently the term Weaning meant the transition process of giving food other than milk, and the process of giving semisolid food. It

also meant the transition is from breast or bottle to cup or bowl.

However as weaning seemed to mean total cessation of breastfeeding , the term weaning has been replaced by complementary feeding . The significance of this change of vocabulary is to stress the fact along with introduction of food other than milk , breast feeds have to be continued at least till one year of age.

The reasons to introduce complementary feeding at 6 months

1. Breast milk cannot provide all nutrients
- 2 Attainment of certain milestones

The following milestones to be attained for complementary feeds to be introduced . The weight should be 5 kg, the infant must have head control, able to sit with support, able to open the mouth when food is offered ,able to take food from a spoon and swallow it , can turn the head to refuse food..Tongue thrust reflex should have disappeared, chewing movements should have appeared and must have the ability to move food around the mouth and to be able to reach for objects. These milestones are achieved by 6 months of age and hence the universal advice is to start the process of introducing complementary feeding at 6 months of age .

The four groups of foods introduced are cereals ,vegetables,fruits, and protein source which is meat,egg,poultry,fish,beans,peas and pulses or dhals. The order in which they are introduced are cereals, protein source , vegetables and fruits. Western guidelines advise adding ground meat after introducing cereals.In the Indian context poultry can

be given if cultural practice allow it . However there is great reluctance amongst mothers to give animal protein other than egg before the first year of life. So the order would be cereals, vegetable , protein source in the form of Dhal, and lastly fruits.

### **The first weaning food at 6 months**

Feed the child sitting preferably on a chair

First introduce rice cereal, later try other cereals, Add some mother's milk or formula milk.

Rice mixed with milk would be the first weaning food.The texture should be strained or pureed. The consistency should be that of rice batter. Ready made cereals iron fortified can be also be given start with rice then give barley,oatmeal corn and then wheat cereal.

Tips for the first phase of introduction of Complementary feeding.

1. Mother and child should be relaxed and in an adventurous mood.
2. Offer one teaspoons of rice cereal mixed with milk .
3. No salt , sugar, or honey should be added.
4. Start with small serving sizes of one teaspoon increase gradually.
5. Given single ingredient food at a time and continue for 4-5 days before introducing a another food. Watch for signs of allergy (eczema, diarrhea, swelling of tongue)
6. At 6 months an infant may have one solid feed, at 7 months two and by 8 months can have three solid

feeds per day

### Other complementary foods at 6 months

1. Purees of vegetables like carrot, potato, sweet potato and pumpkins , introduce separately
2. Raw mashed banana , cooked apple

### From 7- 9months

1. Purees of lean meat or poultry
2. Purees of dhal,
3. Purees of vegetables and rice
4. Vegetables include peas,cabbage and spinach.
  
5. Fruit juice 1:10 dilution with water not more than 60ml/day
6. Yogurt, paneer and cheese
7. Introduce Citrus fruits oranges and sweetlime
8. Cooled boiled water use cup,glass not a bottle. Not more than 60ml at one time and no more than 125ml water /day

### From 10 months

2-3 meals/day, 2 snacks and 500-600ml milk

Three servings of starchy food like rice,,khichidi (1 ½ cups )

One serving of meat,well cooked eggs

Or two servings of dhal,peas,beans

One or two servings of cheese or yogurt.

### Finger foods

Baby is ready for finger foods when it is able to hold food in its hand and bring it to its mouth. Generally it

occurs at the time the baby is learning to crawl.

### Examples of finger food

1. Soft ripe fruit cut into baby bite sized pieces or strips . banana, plums, mango.
2. Grapes with seed removed and cut into strips.
3. Cooked vegetables cut into baby bite sized pieces
4. Dry toast , bread crusts.
5. Shredded cheese

### Texture

Change the texture of the food in the following order as the child is able to crawl and walk

(9-12 months)Soft mashed foods with tiny soft lumps, minced foods. Baby bite sized pieces of food (finger foods) Foods with soft texture and later moderate texture. Change texture when the infant reaches a new milestone. Persisting with pureed food may delay chewing skills.

### Amounts of food

There is no set amount of food that a baby should eat. Start with just one teaspoon of any new food and increase the amount of food next time you offer it. Signs that the infant wants more food could include opening the mouth when food is seen, moving the head towards the food and reaching towards the food . A baby who is full will close its mouth , turn the head away and cover its mouth with the hand and shake its head “no” or cry. When feeding more than one kind of food do not let the baby fill up on one kind of food

before offering the next kind. Instead , offer a spoonful of one kind of food and then offer a spoonful or two of another kind of food .Keep repeating this pattern until the baby shows it is full. This lets the baby decide how much of each food he/she wants to eat and let them try all the foods provided.

### Foods to avoid under One year

Honey  
Chocolate  
Soft drinks  
Tea Coffee  
Salt  
Pickles  
Fried food  
Sweets

### Choking

Avoid these foods till four years of age Nuts,seeds,raw carrotpieces,corn,popcorn,raisins,dried fruits and any food hard to chew. Cook hard vegetables and fruits to

soften them and then cut them into baby bite sized pieces.

### Diet from 1 to 2 years of age

. By this time the infant should be eating from the family pot and having three meals a day , two snacks and 500 ml of milk per day .Establish a diet plan such as 'basic five' for balance and diversity, depending on the parent's choice

The following would be a diet plan for one year old

1. Grains : 3 ounce of cereals where One ounce equals  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of cooked cereal or  
Or one slice of bread
2. Vegetables : 1 cup of Vegetables ( 1 cup is about 250ml)
3. Fruits : 1 cup of Fruits
4. Dairy Group: 2 cups of Milk ( A cup of dairy equals an 250 ml of milk or 60gms cheese)
5. Protein Source : 2 ounces. One ounce equivalent is one egg ,  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup of meat, poultry fish  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of beans or dhal or  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz of nuts