

Time for Textures?

About 4-6 Months:

By now, your baby has probably been enjoying iron-fortified baby cereal and thin, smooth purees of meats, vegetables and fruit, along with breastmilk or formula. She is learning to eat and enjoy food, and likely already has some favorites!



About 6-8 Months:

Your baby is probably ready for new eating adventures! Introduce foods that have a mashed texture and start to practice using a cup. You may want to try foods like mashed fruits, vegetables and beans.



About 8-12 Months:

Now is a good time to get your baby used to even more textures. Offer him soft or well-cooked foods and finger foods like shredded cheese, well-cooked vegetables, scrambled eggs, mashed fish, tofu, diced soft fruits, and crackers. Allow your baby to feed himself, even if things get messy! Don't give him foods that he could choke on, like popcorn, hot dogs, gummy foods, seeds, nuts, raisins, and grapes.



Making Homemade Baby Foods — It's Easier Than You Think!



Some jarred baby foods contain added sugar, salt and starch, which your baby doesn't need. Homemade baby food can be healthier, help you save money and get your baby used to the foods your family eats.

Here's how to make foods for your baby at home:

- You can use a fork, baby food grinder or a blender.
- Wash all equipment in hot soapy water. Rinse and dry.
- Prepare fresh fruits and vegetables by scrubbing and peeling off the skin; remove stems, pits and seeds.
- Prepare meats by removing bones, skin and visible fat.
- Drain and rinse canned vegetables and fruits.
- Steam or boil foods until soft.
- Let foods cool to room temperature.
- Mash, puree or grind food by adding small amounts of cooking water, breast milk or formula until the mixture is smooth.
- **DO NOT ADD** sugar, honey, maple syrup, Karo syrup, salt, fats or oils. They are not necessary and can be harmful to your baby.

Keeping things safe:

- Spoon the food your baby will eat into a small bowl. Feeding from the original container will cause leftovers to spoil quickly.
- Seal the container tightly and put it into the refrigerator right away.
- Use the stored baby food within 2-3 days. After that, throw it away.
- Don't chew your baby's food before giving it to her or share utensils. It could make your baby sick!

Time-saving tips:

- Freeze pureed baby food in ice cube trays. When solid, store in freezer bags. Use within 3 months.

