

# Enjoyable • Comfortable • Baby Food

–For mothers and fathers to enjoy raising their children... From "A Support Guide to Breastfeeding and Weaning"–

## Signs that it is about time to start weaning



Pushes out of their mouth less with their tongue when a spoon or other object is put in their mouth

Weaning usually begins at around 5-6 months of age. You should start gradually, using the following developmental signs as a guide.



Sits up with your support



Can properly support their own neck



Shows interest in food

### Don't rush to start weaning before your baby is ready

Babies' growth and development varies from one individual to another. Weaning is usually started around 5 to 6 months of age, but it should be done after careful observation of your baby's condition. You may be concerned due to the weaning progress of other babies born around the same time, or what you hear from others around you, but don't rush into it.

### Key Points for Starting Weaning

#### One spoonful at a time, slowly

The purpose of this is to familiarize your child with the texture and taste of food so that they can swallow it.



#### About the amount of baby food, breast milk and formula

For approximately the first month of weaning, weaning food should be given once a day. Breast milk and formula should be given as your child desires. After the first month of weaning, weaning food should be given twice a day. Breast milk and formula should be given after weaning. Separate to weaning, breast milk should be given as your child desires, and formula should be given approximately three times a day.

#### Let's proceed with weaning enjoyably

Baby food is not a "special meal" but a part of the family's diet. If you insist too much on homemade food and stress yourself out, you will not be able to enjoy your meals as much. When you are busy or feeling stuck with making baby food, try to make it easier on yourself by using store bought baby food or sharing food from your family's meal.

#### A chance to revise your family's eating habits

Tastes and food preferences developed during infancy influence later eating habits. Excessive or unbalanced nutrition is also closely associated with lifestyle-related diseases in adulthood. Preparing baby food is a chance to rethink the way your family eats, including seasoning and ingredient choices.

Light-tasting, low-fat, and other healthy cooking methods and food choices will lay the foundation for your child's healthy eating habits in the future.

### Weaning Program

Proceed at your child's pace while watching how they eat. Proceed by carefully watching not only the amount of food eaten, but also their mouth movements.

	4 Months Old	5-6 Months Old	6-7 Months Old	8 Months Old	9-11 Months Old	12-18 Months Old
Early Morning					(Baby Food) + Formula	Baby Food + Cow's Milk or Formula
Morning		Baby Food + Formula	Baby Food + Formula	Baby Food + Formula	Baby Food + Formula	Baby Food + Cow's Milk or Formula
Afternoon			Baby Food + Formula	Baby Food + Formula	Baby Food + Formula	Snacks (as light meals) + Cow's Milk or Formula
Evening					Baby Food + Formula	Baby Food + Cow's Milk or Formula
Night						(  )

Milk should be given after meals in an amount appropriate for your child.

Amount of milk to be consumed after weaning (or at mealtime)

5-6 Months Old 150-200cc  
7-8 Months Old 100-150cc  
9-11 Months Old 50-100cc  
(Cow's milk should be given for your child from 12 months and older.)

This program is only a guide. Since there is a great deal of individual variation in the infant stage, we recommend that you proceed with a relaxed approach, observing how your child progresses.



## 5-6 Months Old

### How to proceed

#### 1. Starting from rice porridge

Start with rice porridge, which is less likely to cause allergic symptoms. Mash the rice porridge into a smooth paste and give it to your child starting with one spoonful. If they do not like it, do not force them.

#### 2. One type of food at a time as they become used to it

Once your child is used to rice porridge, try vegetables, one spoonful at a time. Soft boiled potatoes, pumpkins, carrots, etc., should be mashed. For leafy greens such as spinach, soft boil the leaf tips, chop them, and mash them. As the variety of vegetables that can be eaten increases, fruits should also be introduced.

### Don't rush at the beginning of weaning, go slowly, one spoonful at a time

This is the period when your child learns to move food in their mouth to the position where the swallow reflex is triggered.

#### 3. Once used to that, introduce tofu, fish and egg yolk

After the rice porridge and vegetables, start with a spoonful of boiled and mashed tofu or white fish, and a grain of rice sized amount of smooth hard-boiled egg yolk.

#### 4. Try things for the first time in the morning

If you are introducing foods for the first time in the morning, you will be able to go to the hospital if your child develops any allergy symptoms.

#### 5. When the amount increases, feed twice a day

After the first month of weaning, your child should eat two meals and a combination of grains, vegetables, and protein.

#### 6. Breastfeeding remains the same

After weaning, provide adequate breast milk or formula.

### How to Feed



\*One spoon is 1/2 to 1/3 of a regular spoon.

If your baby is held or seated in a chair, it will be easier to feed them if they are tilted back slightly.

### Important Notes for Preparing Food



Wash your hands carefully before preparing food.



Wash cooking equipment well and maintain hygiene.



At the beginning of weaning, no seasoning is needed.

### Basic Shape of Ingredients

Smoothly mashed

Rice porridge



Vegetables (mashed)



Tofu (mashed)



Fish (mashed)



Eggs (mash only hard-boiled yolks, add warm water to make smooth)



## 7-8 Months Old

### How to proceed

#### 1. Twice a day rhythm

Wean your baby at a fixed time each day as much as possible, such as morning and evening, or midday and evening, to establish a rhythm of eating. Along with this, be aware of the need to establish a rhythm in your baby's daily life.

#### 2. Increase ingredients little by little

Gradually move from yolks (hard-boiled) to whole eggs, and from white fish to red fish. Also, expand the variety of vegetables and include seaweed.

### Develop a rhythm of eating two meals

This is the period when they learn to use the front of their mouth to take in food and crush it with their tongue and upper jaw.

#### 3. Avoid fatty foods

Start with meats, such as chicken, cooked in an easy-to-eat way. However, avoid fatty foods. Low-salt cheese and yogurt can also be used.

#### 4. Season lightly

Only use a small amount of dashi broth or miso soup. If you use salt, soy sauce, or sugar, use only a very small amount to add flavor. Also, it is recommended to add a little potato starch to slightly thicken the food to make it easier to swallow.

#### 5. Breast milk or formula after weaning

After weaning, give breast milk or formula. Breast milk should be given only as much as your child wants, and formula should be given three times a day.

### How to Feed



Place the flat spoon on your baby's lower lip and wait for their upper lip to close. Your baby will move about the food on their tongue to rub it against the roof of their mouth before swallowing.

### Important Notes for Preparing Food



Foods should always be heated. Eggs, fish, and meat in particular should be well cooked.



Do not give leftovers or premade foods that have been left out for a long time.



If the food is taken from an adult's meal, use something with light flavoring.

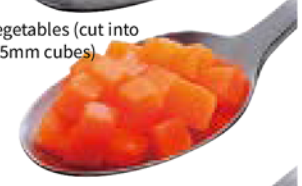
### Basic Shape of Ingredients

Boil until soft and mash roughly

Soft rice



Vegetables (cut into 3-5mm cubes)



Tofu (cut into 3-5mm cubes)



Fish (break into small pieces)



Eggs (start with yolks only, then move to whole eggs)







## 9-11 Months Old

### How to proceed

#### 1. A regular rhythm of three meals a day

Weaning should be done three times a day to match the rhythm of the family's meals. Your baby should also be able to eat a little bit of food taken from the family's meals. For this purpose, family members should also try to eat lightly seasoned food on a regular basis.

#### 2. Enjoy meals together as a family

Meals eaten while enjoying conversation as a family are delicious. Your baby should not be treated like a special person, but



included in the meal and able to sense the enjoyable atmosphere. Don't forget to smile and say, "Delicious, isn't it?"

#### 3. Be careful of iron deficiency

From 9 months and older, it is easy to develop iron deficiency, so prepare a menu that includes foods rich in iron such as red meat, fish, and liver. If liver is difficult to prepare, it is convenient to use baby food. Also, use baby formula instead of cow's milk for cooking.

#### 4. Breast milk or formula after weaning

After weaning, give breast milk or formula. Breast milk should be given only as much as your child wants, and formula should be given two times a day.

### Enjoy the pleasure of eating with three meals a day

This is the period when your child learns to crush things on their gums that cannot be crushed by their tongue and upper jaw.

#### Foods with High Iron Content

Bonito, lean beef, liver, tuna, spinach, edible chrysanthemum, Japanese mustard spinach, soybeans



#### How to Feed



Place the spoon on your child's lower lip and wait for their upper lip to close. If the food is soft, let them bite down on it with their front teeth.

#### Basic Shape of Ingredients

A consistency that can be crushed by gums

Rice



Vegetables (cut into 5-8mm cubes)



Tofu (cut into 5-8mm cubes)



Fish (roughly broken up)



Meat (roughly broken up)



## 12-18 Months Old

### Point

#### 1. Establish a rhythm in daily life

The rhythm for eating also affects waking and sleeping. By aiming for a routine in which your child wakes up comfortably in the morning and feels pleasantly hungry, they will have fewer problems with eating.

#### 2. Supporting "I love to eat by myself!"

Your child who used to be fed by their parents will now "eat by hand," and start to want to eat by themselves. "Eating by hand" is a coordinated eye-hand-mouth movement. By allowing your child to fully engage in "eating by hand," they will become motivated to eat and learn to use a fork, chopsticks, and eating utensils.

#### 3. Surrounding the table with family

The atmosphere of an enjoyable meal should be shared with your child. During this period, try to reduce the time and effort required to prepare food by sharing dishes or using a simple menu, so that you can enjoy the meal together with your child. When sharing food, be careful about seasoning. Be sure to consider seasoning and cooking methods on a regular basis for the health of your family.

### Let your child see with their eyes, grab with their fingers... let them grab and eat their food fully

This is the period when your child learns how to eat bite-sized portions, either by stuffing too much into their mouth or spilling their food.

#### How to Feed

##### Give plenty of opportunities to eat with their hands.

Making a mess, kneading, spilling... To get your baby to properly use their hands when eating, you need to be relaxed and calm with them. Remember these tips to reduce frustration and provide good support.

##### An easy to grab by hand menu

Use easy-to-grab foods such as rice balls and vegetable sticks. Serve easy to spill soups less.



##### Creating an environment where it is okay to get dirty

Wear an apron, place newspaper under the table, and prepare a wet dish towel to provide an environment that is okay to get dirty.

##### Encourage hunger and the desire to eat

Let your child have plenty of play and a regular eating rhythm. Feeling hungry at mealtime is important to encourage self-motivated eating behavior.



#### Basic Shape of Ingredients

To a firmness that can be chewed with gums

Rice



Vegetables (sticks or bite-sized pieces)



Tofu (bite-sized pieces)



Fish (bite-sized pieces)



Meat (bite-sized pieces)



# Nutritional Education Begins in Infancy

A one-year-old child should eat about half as much food as an adult!

## Notes Regarding Dietary Content

- Since babies are still unable to chew adequately, hard, fibrous leafy vegetables and meats should be avoided.
- Although you will be sharing your family's food more, keep the seasoning light.
- Dairy products can also be used as main dishes.
- \*Cow's milk should be given according to the progress (completion) of weaning, but preferably after the age of 1 year.

**It is important to follow a lifestyle rhythm of "early sleep, early rise, breakfast"**

The rhythm of your lifestyle, such as going to bed and waking up, also influences eating. The source of appetite is an empty stomach. If you aim for your child to wake up pleasantly in the morning and experience a comfortable feeling of hunger, the rhythm of breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be well-spaced, and you will be able to provide appropriate snacks.

## Baby Food Q&A

**Q. Should I give my 9 month old child follow-on milk?**

**A. If you plan to, then do so after 9 months of age**

Since breast milk or formula is standard until your child is one year old, there is no need to use follow-on milk at this time if weaning is going well and your child is growing in accordance with the expected growth curve. If weaning is not progressing smoothly and the risk of iron deficiency is high, follow-on milk should be used after 9 months of age. Follow-on milk is not a substitute for breast milk or formula.

## Snacks Once or Twice a Day

As weaning nears completion, your baby will be able to get most of their energy and nutrients from daily meals, but their stomach will still be too small to eat a large amount at a time. When giving snacks, be sure to give them in specific amounts and at specific times, and be sure to give them with a drink, such as tea.

### Suitable Snacks

#### Potato

Boiled or steamed potatoes, sweet potatoes, etc.



#### Fruit

Bananas, apples, pears, mandarins, etc.



#### Grains

Onigiri, sandwiches, pancakes, etc.



#### Dairy Products

Yogurt, cheese, cow's milk (drinking only after 1 year old), etc.



### CAUTION

#### To all those caring for babies:

- ◆ Babies under 1 year of age can get infant botulism from eating honey.
- ◆ Infant botulism can lead to death in severe cases.
- ◆ Botulism is caused by heat-resistant bacteria that will not be killed by normal heating or cooking, so do not give honey or honey-containing beverages, sweets, or other foods to babies under 1 year of age.



## How to Make Rice Porridge and Soft Rice

The only difference between the methods of preparation is the amount of water used. It is best to make several batches at a time and freeze each batch separately.

1. Wash and drain the rice, place in a pot, pour in a measured amount of water, and let sit for 20 to 30 minutes to sufficiently absorb the water.
2. Cover and place over high heat. When it comes to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 50 minutes with the lid slightly off to prevent boiling over.
3. Turn off the heat, firmly put on the lid, and steam for about 10 minutes.

### 5-6 Months Old Rice porridge



Rice 0.5 cups



Water 5 cups

### 7-8 Months Old Soft rice



Rice 0.5 cups



Water 3.5 cups

### 9-11 Months Old Rice



Rice 0.5 cups



Water 2.5 cups

### 12-18 Months Old Rice



Rice 0.5 cups



Water 1.5 cups



Fukushima city public health center