

Let your baby
**guide
you**

what, when and how to
introduce solid foods

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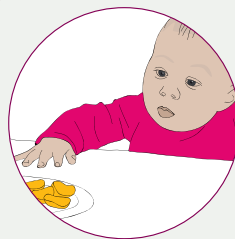
these are the
best foods
for your baby
when starting on
solids at around
6 months

Choose foods
that are
**soft &
smooth**

at around
6 months
your baby will
be ready to try
solid foods

Here are the signs
your baby is ready to
start solid foods...

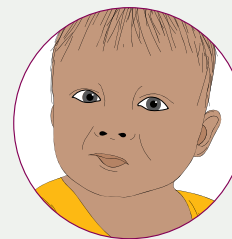
Breast milk or infant formula is all your baby needs for the first 6 months.



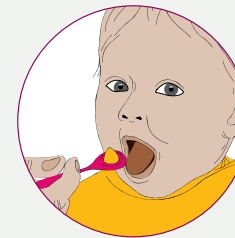
Shows an interest
in food



Can hold their
head up and sit
with less help



Makes chewing
movements
with their mouth



Opens their mouth
when the spoon
touches their lip or
gets near their mouth



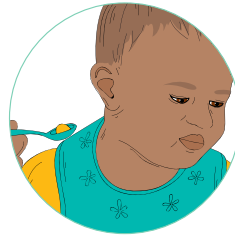
Can keep food
in their mouth and
swallow, instead
of spitting out

Let your baby

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Here are some signs
your baby has had
enough to eat...

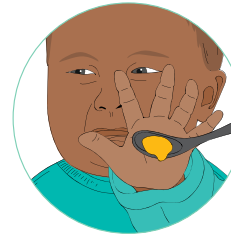
Babies are very good at knowing if they need more food and when they have had enough. Some babies will eat more than others.



Turns their
head away



Spits out food



Refuses food
by pushing away
the food or
your hand

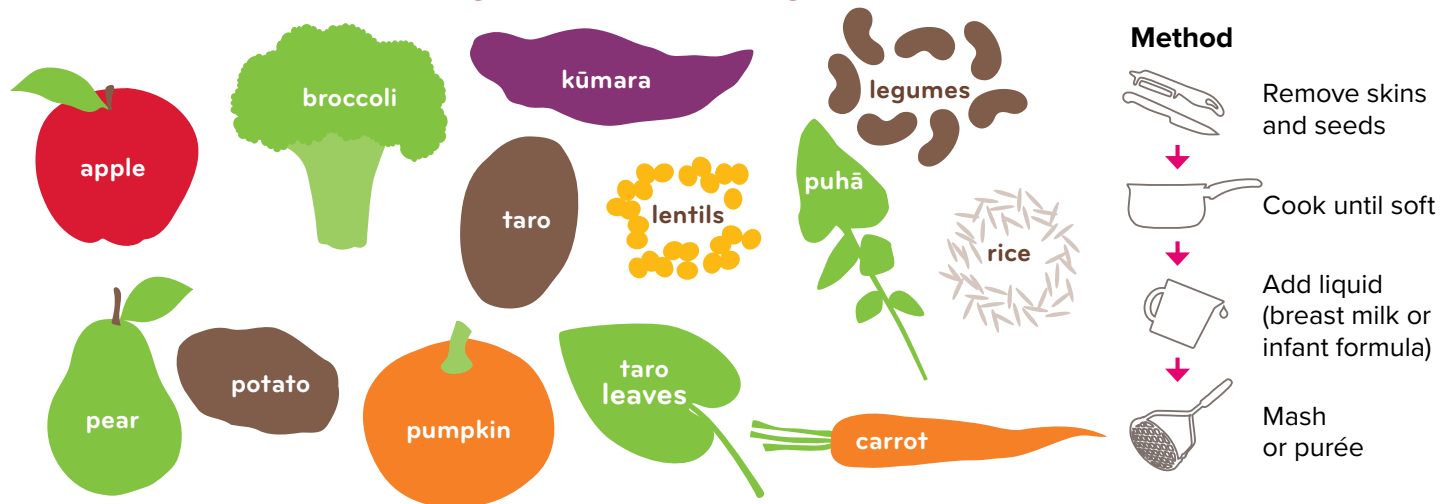


Crying and general
unhappiness

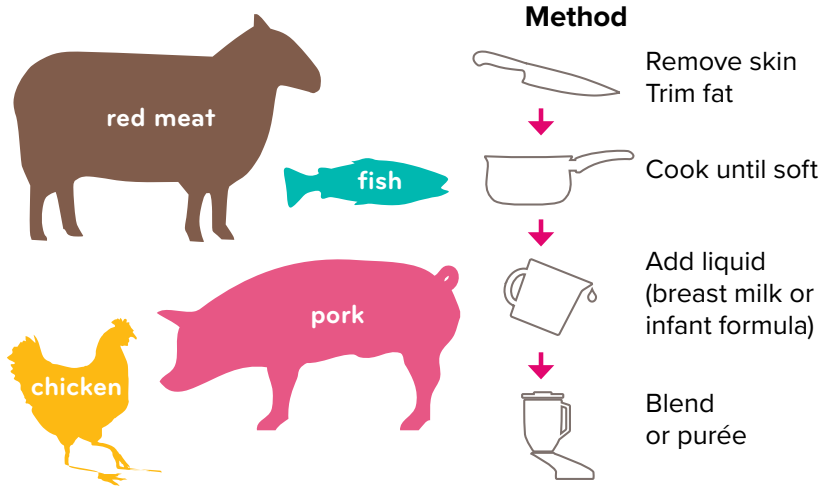


Closes
their mouth

Cooked and puréed vegetables, fruit, legumes, lentils or rice, such as:



Cooked and puréed meat or fish



Mashed uncooked fruit



Store bought



Some useful tips when introducing solid foods

- 1 Offer milk before solids – breast milk or infant formula is still the most important food for your baby.
- 2 Start by offering small amounts – ½ teaspoon to 2 teaspoons. Slowly increase the amount you offer and progress to mashed, lumpy or soft finger foods over the next few weeks.
- 3 Start by offering solids once a day after the milk feed. The amount of complementary foods eaten will gradually increase.
- 4 Encourage a variety of flavours as you introduce complementary foods. There is no need to introduce new foods one at a time, unless it is a common food allergen (such as cow's milk, eggs, nuts, wheat, sesame seeds, shellfish, fish or soya).
- 5 It is important to keep offering (but not forcing) different foods, especially vegetables and fruits, even when a child seems that they do not initially like that food. The food will then become familiar, and they can get used to a range of flavours.
- 6 If your baby refuses a food, try mixing it with a food they like or wait a few days and try again – it may take up to 8-10 times! Verbal encouragement and eating the same foods in front of the baby will also help them to accept new foods.

Babies are very good at knowing when they have had enough to eat.

healthykids.org.nz/eat/infant-feeding

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

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