# **Starting Finger Foods**

At six months, your baby is ready for solid foods. Providing a variety of soft textures and finger foods at six months of age will help baby get the nutrients she needs.

Try the following textures using tender-cooked foods:

Lumpy

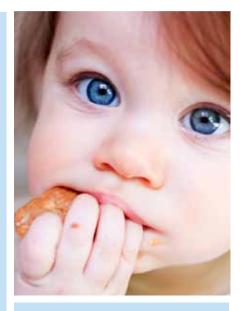
- Mashed
- Finely minced
- Ground

Pureed

Chopped

Offering finger foods allows babies to feed themselves and to pace their eating. Allowing baby to feed herself is important for development. To help baby grow into a healthy eater:

- include baby in family mealtimes and make eye contact with baby,
- minimize distractions during meals and feedings,
- · let baby decide how much to eat from what you have offered, and
- trust when baby shows signs that she has had enough by turning head away or refusing to eat.



# No teeth? No problem!

Finger foods can be offered to babies without teeth as long as the foods are soft and easy to break down into smaller pieces.

# **Vegetables and Fruit**

- Soft, ripe, peeled fruit (e.g., chopped peach, pear, banana, kiwi, melon)
- Soft, cooked vegetables (e.g., carrot, broccoli, cauliflower, potato, sweet potato, zucchini, squash)
- Soft, cooked or poached fruit (e.g., apple, pear)
- Grapes cut in quarters
- Grated, raw vegetables and fruit (e.g., apple, carrots, pear, zucchini)
- Chopped, canned fruit or vegetables (without added sugar or salt)

#### **Grain Products**

- Cooked whole grain pasta (e.g., shells, twists, macaroni, penne)
- Dry cereal (e.g., bran flakes, unsweetened O-shaped cereal)
- Whole grain toast, bread squares or strips
- Whole grain, unsalted crackers
- Soft, cooked whole grain rice
- Homemade muffin torn into small pieces
- Whole grain bagels sliced into small pieces

#### **Milk and Alternatives**

 Grated or small cubes of pasteurized cheese

## **Meat and Alternatives**

- Soft, cooked beans and legumes
- Chopped hard cooked egg
- Tofu cubes
- Meatballs or small strips of meatloaf
- Finely chopped meat or fish
- Peanut or nut butters spread thinly on whole grain toast strips or whole grain crackers

## **Keep Baby Safe**

Avoid offering these foods, which can cause choking in children less than four years of age:

- Hot dogs, sausages
- Marshmallows
- Popcorn
- Whole nuts and seeds
- Nut butters on a spoon or soft bread
- Raisins
- Raw, hard fruits or vegetables, unless grated
- Fish with bones
- Hard candies
- Cough drops
- Gum, gummy candies, and gummy vitamins
- Foods with toothpicks or skewers



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