

Developmentally Ready

There is no single, direct signal to determine when an infant is developmentally ready to accept solid foods. A provider should be in constant communication with the parent regarding when and what solid foods should be introduced.

When talking with parents or guardians about when to serve solid foods to infants in care, the following guidelines can help determine if an infant is developmentally ready:

- ✓ Sits in a high chair with good head control
- ✓ Opens his/her mouth for food
- ✓ Can move food from a spoon into his/her throat
- ✓ Doubled birth weight and weighs at least 13 pounds

Once an infant is developmentally ready to accept solid foods, you are required to offer them to the infant.

Solid foods are introduced gradually. New foods may be introduced one at a time over the course of a few days, and an infants eating patterns may change.

For example, an infant may eat a cracker one week and not the next week.



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INFANTS STARTING SOLID FOODS (6-11 MONTHS)

Infants between 6-11 months, as developmentally ready, should be served infant iron fortified cereal and/or meat/meat alternate and a fruit and/or vegetable or both for all meals.



	Meat Choices	Fruit and Vegetable	Grains
Creditable options	Table Food Meats: Beef, turkey, chicken, ham, fish Meat Alternates: beans, cheese, eggs, yogurt* Jarred infant foods: chicken, beef or turkey	Fruits and vegetables (texture modified as developmentally ready), pureed, diced, chopped Jarred infant foods: plain fruit or vegetable only	Single Grain and Multigrain iron-fortified infant cereal. Examples: rice cereal, oatmeal cereal, multigrain cereal, whole wheat cereal, wheat cereal (Ready to eat cereals*- at snack only)
Non-Creditable	Breaded fish, canned fish with bones, hot dogs, sausages, nuts, nut butters, cheese food, cheese spreads and combination infant foods.	Juice, Desserts (such as pudding or custard), mixed meals (such as apples and chicken dinner)	Homemade infant cereal, infant cereal without iron fortification, grain & fruit combinations like multigrain & apple or oatmeal & peach

* Yogurt and ready to eat cereals must follow sugar limits.

Choking Hazards: Always be aware of foods that can cause choking.

Examples are whole grapes, raw vegetables, and whole pieces of canned fruit.

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