**Solid Food Introduction**

**When should I start introducing my baby to solid foods?**The American Academy of Pediatrics’ Committee on Nutrition advises that supplemental food not be introduced before six months. Most babies will be ready for solid foods between 6 and 8 months.

**What are the signs that my baby may be ready for solid foods?**
Sits up without support
Turns head when full
Absence of the tongue-thrusting reflex

Presence of a tooth

**How do I start?**Start slowly! Introduce a small amount of food on the tip of your finger or with a spoon to start. In the beginning solid foods are meant more taste and play more than a means of consuming calories. Increase to approximately 1 tablespoon, or more if the baby is showing signs of continuing hunger.
Introduce one new food at a time and wait 4 days before trying a new food. This way you can watch for signs of allergic reactions and delayed food intolerances. At 6-9 months start with hypoallergenic foods that are pureed and mashed. Allergies or intolerances typically occur with foods if they are introduced before a baby’s digestive system is mature, if a parent has an allergy, or with genetically modified foods.

**How will I know if my child has an allergy?**In the week following the introduction it is important to look for signs of food reaction such as: skin or diaper rash, runny nose or watery eyes, hyperactivity or lethargy, dark circle under the eyes, gas, constipation, fatigue, fussiness, or sneezing. If one of these symptoms occur, then go back to the foods that are safe (or milk alone) and wait until your child returns to normal. You can retry the food again in a few weeks. If your child still reacts we advise waiting 3-6 months before trying the food a third time.

**When to see a physician:**

Fever over 101° F, lethargy, severe diarrhea or constipation, severe diaper rash, thrush, extreme irritability, inconsolable crying or colic.

**Foods to avoid for babies:**

Caffeine (including soda and chocolate), chemical additives (including artificial colors and flavors), raw honey, salt, sugar, and allergic foods (commonly wheat, dairy, citrus, corn, egg whites, peanuts, soy and tomatoes).

**Chokable foods:**

NEVER give the following foods to a baby less than 1 year of age:

* + Apple chunks and slices, dry cereal, grapes, hard candy, hard cookies, hot dogs, tofu dogs, meat chunks, peanut and nut butters that are not thinned, popcorn, potato chips, raw carrot slices or sticks, hard rice cakes, whole nuts and seeds, whole berries.

***\* Highly allergenic foods- watch closely for reactions, if any are noted, then stop***

***that food and wait another 1-3 months to try again*.**

**6 Months of age- mashed or pureed foods**

applesauce carrots pear

sweet potato elk/venison poultry (chicken & turkey)

peach yams quinoa

nectarine beets millet

plum peas flax oil

avocado zucchini safflower oil

banana parsnips sunflower oil

winter squash (acorn, butternut, delicate, sugar pie pumkin, etc.)

**9 Months of age-mashed, pureed or small finger foods**

frozen berries (cut in half) \***oatmeal**

\* **potato** bean dips - hummus, baba ghanouj, etc.

grapes (cut in half) \***corn**

melon sunflower & pumpkin seed butter (thinned)

broccoli soaked raisons (cut small)
eggplant maple syrup

cauliflower amasake

chard black strap molasses

kale & other greens goat’s milk yoghurt & cheese

bok choy lamb

asparagus pork

celery cucumbers
beans-black, garbonzo, white, black-eyed peas, navy, kidney, pinto

& lentils (use cold water rinse and cook well)

**12 Months of age- mashed or cut into small pieces for finger food**

strawberries beef

dates mushrooms

**\*orange & other citrus** cashew or macadamia butter (thinned)

**\*tomato** almond butter (thinned)

**\*pepper \*cow’s milk and cheeses**

**\*eggs** artichokes

**\*peanut butter (thinned)** honey

barley, rye good quality dry cereals (eg. Oatios)

**\*wheat-includes wheat &white flour, most breads, semolina pasta, couscous**

\***soy-includes soy milk, tofu, tempah, miso, “meat alternative products”**

fish(no bones) – salmon, halibut, mackerel, cod, tuna - but limit canned tuna to 1-2 servings per week due to high mercury levels)