

## FINGER FOODS

### FOR BABY



Babies like to use their hands to learn about solid foods. When your baby shows signs she is ready to feed herself, offer finger foods. Offer different flavors and textures so she will learn to eat and like a variety of healthy foods.

### YOUR BABY IS READY WHEN SHE:

**Shows interest:** Leans forward, points at food, and is interested in what other people are eating.

**Shows ability:** Sits up without support and can use her thumb and fingers to pick up small things.

**Shows success:** Can eat smooth and mashed foods from a spoon without issue.

### EXPECT A MESS!

Learning how to self-feed is messy. You can help make the clean up a little easier:

- Cover the floor with a plastic mat or newspaper.
- Use a bib when feeding your baby.
- Feed your baby wearing only a diaper.

### FABULOUS FINGER FOODS:

**On the go:** O-shaped cereal, puffed breakfast cereal, graham crackers

**Cut up:** whole grain toast, pancakes, french toast

**Soft (ripe) mashed or diced:** banana, avocado, melon, peach, pear, kiwi, canned mandarin oranges, peaches or pears, canned beets, thawed frozen peas

**Cooked and chopped or mashed:** sweet potato, green beans, squash, carrots, pasta, ground meat, egg, cooked fish, beans, tofu





## ➤ TIPS ◀

- Offer your baby small servings. She can decide how much to eat.
- Your baby learns by watching you. Put her in a high chair or booster seat at the table so she can eat with family.
- Always watch your baby while she is eating.



## BE CAREFUL!

- ✗ Avoid foods that could cause choking: crisp fruits, hard candy, raw veggies, large pieces of meat, hot dogs, nuts, seeds, chips, whole grapes, popcorn, or dried fruit.
- ✗ Avoid raw and unpasteurized foods: honey, raw milk, sushi, or raw fish.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF...

**My baby is not interested?** Some babies start finger foods later than others. Keep trying, but do not force your baby to eat.

**My baby does not like a new food?** Keep offering small amounts of food. A baby may try a new food 10-15 times before accepting a new flavor or texture.

**My baby gags?** Gagging is a natural reflex and common as babies learn how to chew and swallow new foods. If your baby is choking, this means food is lodged in the throat and help is needed immediately.

**My baby eats too fast?** Some babies need help to learn how quickly or slowly they should eat. You can help her slow down by offering one or two foods in small amounts and then offer more as needed.

