

Winning at Weaning

Weaning is a process in which a baby is gradually introduced to solid foods no earlier than six months old.



Baby led weaning

The baby is offered single picked foods and will feed themselves.

Traditional weaning

Parents/carers will lead the way by spoon feeding the baby using pureed food.

Benefits of weaning

- Introduces baby to a variety of foods, tastes and textures
- Helps improve motor skills and development
- Positive connection with food and meals

Introducing solid foods

6 months

A baby can begin to try a few spoonful's of purees or soft finger foods as it is important to get them used to eating for their overall growth. At this age, food is not a replacement, so babies will still require their usual amount of breast milk or formula milk. Do not worry about how much food the baby is eating at this stage, it is all very new to them!

7 to 9 months

A baby can gradually begin to eat solids three times a day. Introduce baby to a variety of iron rich foods including meat, dairy, fruit, vegetables, eggs, fish and a variety of textured foods such as mashed or lumpy foods. As baby begins to eat more solids, they will adapt to how much breast milk or formula milk they require.

10 to 12 months

A Baby should be eating three meals a day by now. If baby is still hungry after lunch or dinner, they can eat a healthy dessert. Continue to include a variety of foods and encourage eating together at mealtimes. Babies do not require added salt or sugar to their meals at any stage of weaning. Breastfed and formula fed babies will adapt accordingly.

12+ months

A Baby will no longer need breast milk or formula and can begin having pasteurised cows/goats/oat/almond milk as a drink alongside their 3 meals a day (however, you can breastfeed for as long as you choose). By 12 months old, babies should be eating around 700 to 800 calories per day across three meals. Foods should include sources of protein, carbohydrates, fat, iron, calcium, vitamins A, D and fibre.

Types of weaning

Baby led weaning



Photo by Jacob Lund from Noun Project

Traditional weaning



Photo by Jacob Lund from Noun Project

Breastfeeding/Bottle feeding must be included alongside weaning as it is essential for the nutritional requirements of the baby.

Allergens & allergy indications

Food allergies are common in babies, and it is important to know the ingredients present in the weaning food.

Some of the ingredients/ allergens to look for are,

Milk or dairy, peanuts or nuts, eggs, fish, gluten, foods with wheat, barley

Certain immediate and delayed symptoms are:

- Hives (reddish rash particularly around the mouth, nose which spreads throughout the body)
- Watery eyes, sneezing, blocked nose
- Swelling of lips, eyes etc
- Constipation
- Colic (the baby cries for a long time without any reason)
- Stomach pain
- Diarrhoea or vomiting



Scan for age appropriate recipe ideas

Store bought vs Homemade

Before beginning weaning, choosing between store bought or homemade food for the baby can be a tough choice. This choice can be completely up to you and you can choose the best for the baby.

Most of the store-bought foods present in the market are generally made from natural and organic ingredients that are safe for the baby. If you wish to feed store-bought or want to try the different assorted baby foods present in the market, you can go ahead and try them!

Whereas, if you wish to feed homemade baby food or finger foods, you can go for some easy age appropriate recipes to prepare at home!

Safe Weaning

Safe weaning includes elements like safe food preparation methods, food storage to avoid cross contamination, allergens and allergies, hygiene and providing size appropriate finger foods to avoid choking.

During weaning, the baby might exhibit gagging. Gagging is a natural process and it acts as a reflex to avoid choking. Whereas choking hazard foods can cause choking which can be a serious concern.

For further information visit <https://www.sja.org.uk/get-advice/first-aid-advice/choking/baby-choking/>



Storage Ideas

For more information, visit
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/weaning-and-feeding/babys-first-solid-foods/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/safe-weaning/food-allergies/>

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