

Eat the RAINBOW: Baby's First Foods

Red

- Apples (pectin, cellulose)
- Beets (inulin)
- Cherries (polyphenols)
- Raspberries (FOS, polyphenols)
- Strawberries (polyphenols)
- Tomatoes (pectin)
- Watermelon (FOS)

Orange

- Carrots (pectin)
- Citrus zest (pectin)
- Bell peppers (polyphenols)
- Mango (pectin)
- Nectarines (pectin)
- Oranges (pectin)
- Peaches (pectin)
- Pumpkin (resistant starch)
- Squash (resistant starch)
butternut, acorn
- Sweet potatoes (pectin, resistant starch)

Yellow

- Corn (cellulose)
- *Eggs (omega-3, iron)
- Grapefruit (pectin)
- Pears (pectin, FOS, cellulose)
- Plantains (resistant starch)

Green

- Asparagus (inulin)
- Avocado (omega-3)
- Bok choy (cellulose)
- Broccoli (cellulose)
- Brussel sprouts (cellulose)
- Edamame (omega-3)
- Green beans (cellulose)
- Green peas, mashed (resistant starch)
- Leafy greens (iron, cellulose)
spinach, chard, kale
- Leeks (inulin)
- Zucchini (cellulose)

Blue / Purple / Black

- Berries (polyphenols)
- Black beans (resistant starch, cellulose, GOS)
- Eggplant (polyphenols)
- Plums (pectin)
- Purple potatoes (pectin, resistant starch)

White/Tan/Brown

- Cauliflower (cellulose)
- *Dairy (calcium)
cheese, yogurt
- Garlic (antimicrobial, FOS)
- Legumes (iron, resistant starch, cellulose, GOS) *black-eyed peas, chickpeas, cannellini & kidney beans, lentils, *peanut, *soy*
- Meat, antibiotic-free, grass fed (iron) *Chicken, dark poultry meat, liver, red meat*
- Mushrooms (beta glucan, chitin) *shiitake, button*
- Nut and seed butters (polyphenols, omega-3) *sunflower, pumpkin, *almond*
- Oats (beta glucan, resistant starch) *rolled oats for babies 6-10 mo. steel cut oats for 10 mo. and older*
- Olive oil (omega-3)
- Onion (inulin, FOS)
- Quinoa (resistant starch, polyphenols)
- Sauerkraut (fermented)
- Seeds (resistant starch, polyphenols) *chia, ground flax, hemp, *sesame less than 1 tablespoon daily*
- *Shellfish (iron, omega-3)
- Spices (polyphenols) *cinnamon, cumin, oregano, thyme*
- *Whole wheat (resistant starch)
- *Wild, fatty fish (omega-3) *salmon, trout, sardines*
- Yogurt & kefir (fermented, IMO) *plant-based or dairy*

*Common allergens: Early introduction of allergens may prevent allergies later on.

Parent guide to starting solids

Aim to offer a **wide diversity** of vegetables, high-quality proteins, healthy fats, spices and grains in addition to fruits, to support a healthy microbiome. **The amount** of food does not matter as much as the exposure to a wide variety.

Steaming helps to make foods soft, easy to digest and preserves nutrients.

Fermented foods are superheroes that support microbiome diversity! Yogurt, kefir and sauerkraut are great first ferments. **Pro tip:** you can mix the juices from sauerkraut into other soft foods to provide those beneficial microbes too!

When to start solids

The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend providing breast milk exclusively for a baby's first 6 months, if possible, with the [introduction of solid food](#) at around 6 months of age.

Some important signs of baby readiness include:

- Sitting with little or no support and good head control
- Opening their mouth and leaning towards food (showing interest)
- Swallowing food rather than pushing it back out
- Bringing objects to their mouth, trying to hold small objects

First baby foods

Where possible, aim to offer organic foods. When offering animal protein, aim for wild-caught fish, pasture-raised eggs and antibiotic-free and grass-fed meats.

- **Baby's first ferments:**
 - [Kefir or yogurt](#) (dairy or plant-based) - serve plain or add to purees like applesauce
 - Sauerkraut - start with a small amount of sauerkraut juices added to foods, then serve plain or add chopped sauerkraut to mashed avocado, purees or even yogurt.
- **Emphasize a rainbow of fruits and vegetables:** Provide a wide diversity of plant foods to help feed beneficial belly buddies and [build a resilient microbiome](#).
- **Provide iron rich foods:** Babies 7-12 months old need 11 mg/day of iron! Include a variety of the following: beef and chicken liver, red meat, dark poultry meat, lentils, cannellini and kidney beans, black-eyed peas. Daily use of rice-based cereals is not recommended due to potential [high levels of arsenic](#).
- **Include grains, legumes and seeds:** Contain prebiotic fibers that help feed baby's microbiome.
- **Include foods rich in healthy fats:** Foods such as avocado, ground flaxmeal, olive oil, ghee, and fatty fish (wild salmon, sardines, or mackerel) support brain development, energy production and overall well-being.
- **Spices and herbs:** Add [garlic and spices](#) such as cinnamon, cumin, oregano and thyme into foods for extra flavor. Their antimicrobial properties keep unfriendly bacteria away!
- **Allergens:** [Early introduction of allergens](#) may prevent [allergies](#) later on. Regularly include dairy, eggs, fish, peanuts, sesame, tree nut, soy, shellfish and wheat. Small amounts of cow's milk can be mixed into foods, but [breastmilk](#) or formula should be the primary fluid source until 12 months old.
- **Avoid these foods:** Honey until 12 months, caffeinated drinks, juice and added sugar, added salt, and foods with additives, coloring, or [emulsifiers](#). Avoid pickles high in sodium and sugar, look for 'live cultures' on labels for best benefit.
- ***A quick note on oats:** Be aware that oats can be highly processed. Choose rolled oats instead of quick oats for babies 6 to 10 months old, then opt for steel cut oats for babies 10 months and older. Consider sprouted oats for easier digestibility.

Resources

Introducing Solids:

[How To Introduce Solid Foods Solid Starts 101 Before One](#)

Introducing Allergens:

[When Can Babies Have Peanut Butter And Other Common Allergens? Lil Mixins Early Allergen Introduction Ready Set Food! Mix-Ins](#)