



# Baby Food *For Me*

*Around 6 months, I may be ready to try baby cereal, vegetables, fruits and meats.*

I need to move through 4 stages of baby food – smooth, mashed, chopped, and small pieces. Try one new food at a time.

## 1 Smooth foods (strained or pureed)



### Baby food from the store:

- Start with baby cereal and **plain** (one ingredient) baby foods. When I am used to plain foods, you can try mixtures.
- WIC will give me baby cereal and baby fruits and vegetables. WIC will also give me baby meats if I am fully breastfed.



### Homemade baby food:

- Wash your hands and the food.
- Cook vegetables with a little water until they are soft.
- Cook meat until it is not pink.
- Use a blender or baby food grinder to make food smooth for me.
- WIC will give me fresh bananas.

## 2 Mashed foods (smooth with some tiny lumps)



When I am good at eating smooth foods, try mashing some of our family's foods for me, using a fork.

- Good choices are soups, noodles, rice, soft vegetables and fruits (including my bananas), beans, cooked egg yolk, cooked ground meat, tofu.
- Try one new food at a time.
- I don't need sugar, salt, spices, butter, fat, or gravy.

## 3 Chopped foods (more lumps)



When I can chew and swallow mashed foods, chop our family's foods into tiny pieces for me.

- I like to try different colors and flavors!

## 4 Small soft pieces of food



When I am ready, around 9 to 10 months, give me small pieces of soft foods. You can try peeled soft fruits, soft cooked vegetables, and cut-up noodles.

- Let me sit with our family to eat.
- By the time I am one year old, I will probably eat most of our family foods.
- Give me lots of practice eating with my spoon and my fingers.
- I am messy when I eat. This is how I learn to feed myself!

# Safety Tips



## Baby food from the store:

- Keep in a cool place.
- Don't use containers that are sticky or stained. Don't use jars with chipped glass or rusty lids.
- Check the "use by" dates and if passed, throw away.
- Rinse all containers before opening.
- You should hear a popping sound when you open a jar. If not, throw it away.



## Heating and serving my food:

- If you heat my food in the microwave, it can get too hot and burn my mouth. **Stir and test it!**
- Don't heat my food in plastic containers.
- Serve my food from a dish, not from the baby food container.



## Leftover food:

- Throw out any food left in my dish.
- Keep bought or homemade baby food in the refrigerator. Use in 2 days.
- You can freeze bought or homemade baby food for 1 month. Ice cube trays are good for this.



## Keep me from choking:

- Don't give me foods I might choke on, like hot dogs, nuts, seeds, popcorn, chips, grapes, raisins, peanut butter, raw vegetables, and candy.
- Be sure I can chew and swallow foods from one stage of foods before I move to the next stage.



## Tips for using my WIC baby foods:

- Mix my WIC baby foods with mashed or chopped foods.
- You can add my WIC baby foods to soups and casseroles for me — don't add too much salt or spices!
- My WIC baby foods are also good when we are away from home.



# Recipes Using My WIC Baby Foods

## 1. Smooth – Fruit flavored baby cereal

- Mix a few spoonfuls of baby cereal with breastmilk or formula.
- Add a few spoonfuls of baby fruit or smooth pureed bananas.

## 2. Mashed – Baby soup

- Blend or mash some of our family's soup or stew or casserole.
- Add a few spoonfuls of baby cereal.

## 3. Mashed or Chopped – Baby noodles or rice

- Mash some cooked noodles or rice with a fork.
- Add a few spoonfuls of baby vegetables and mix.
- Add a few spoonfuls of baby meat or some mashed cooked meat or mashed beans.

## 4. Soft Pieces – Snack

- Spread some baby fruit or vegetables on small pieces of soft bread.
- Let me feed myself!

---

California WIC Program, California Department of Public Health  
*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*



#910188 Rev 11/11 