

Textured Foods for Baby

Is My Baby Ready?

At 8-10 months of age your baby may be ready to start some lumpier baby foods. Be sure your baby has already tried a wide variety of smooth baby foods first. Infant cereals, vegetables, fruits, cooked egg yolks, and plain strained meats of a smooth consistency should be introduced before trying lumpier textures. If your baby tolerates thicker smooth foods (for example, mashed potatoes or strained peas) then he may be ready to try lumpier textured foods.

Getting Started

Be sure your baby is sitting well-supported in a comfortable chair. You should always be at eye level with your baby while spoon-feeding him. Don't force baby to look up at you as this makes swallowing more difficult. Always start with smooth foods your baby likes. Thicken these foods by adding infant cereal, mashed potatoes, mashed banana, cooked egg yolk, etc. Then gradually start adding soft lumpy foods to these already familiar foods. These lumps should require very little chewing. Examples include fork-mashed pasta or rice, cottage cheese, slightly mashed banana or cooked carrots, or tiny pieces of graham crackers. Start with a small amount of the lumpy foods added to the favorite foods, then gradually increase as tolerated.

What's Next?

Always wait 3-5 days before introducing any new foods to your baby. Making homemade baby foods is an excellent way to help your baby gradually increase textures. You can change the amount of blending or mashing required as your baby adjusts to more texture. If you choose to use store-bought baby foods, keep in mind that textures do not gradually increase between Stage 2 and Stage 3. You may need to continue to add small lumpy foods as discussed above or fork-mash foods that are too lumpy to get a more gradual effect. As your child increases his textures and variety of foods tolerated, you may start blending or mashing many of the foods you serve the rest of your family.

Recipes

Pineapple Treat

¼ cup infant oatmeal cereal
1 egg yolk (cooked)
½ cup crushed pineapple
2 ½-3 T. infant formula or breastmilk
1 -2 T. tiny pieces of graham crackers

Put the first four ingredients in blender and blend to desired consistency.
Add tiny pieces of graham crackers to add texture gradually.

Cheesy Cauliflower

1/3 cup frozen cauliflower (approx. 10 small florets)
2-3 tsp. infant formula or breastmilk
1 T. shredded cheddar or Colby cheese
1 T. cooked potato or leftover mashed potatoes
1 2 T. cottage cheese

Cook cauliflower according to package directions. Put the first four ingredients in a blender or fork-mash to desired consistency. Add cottage cheese to add texture gradually.