



Central and
North West London
NHS Foundation Trust

Speech and Language Therapy Services

Information for parents



Moving on
from purée



Wellbeing for life

Moving on from purée

For your child, the time to move from pureed smooth foods to more lumpy foods can be difficult. Here you can find some general advice on how to help your child move on from puree.

General tips

Remember that meal times should be times to chat and have fun! Try to make it a family occasion at least once a day.

It is normal for babies to initially gag on lumpier foods, they probably also did it when you first introduced pureed food to them.

Older babies (over 6-8 months) are more likely to resist new foods or tastes. It is important to continue giving it to them to make the food become familiar, even if they do not eat any of it at first.

Older babies and young children may not want a new food the first time they are given it. This doesn't always mean they don't like it, they may just be suspicious of it because it's new and once you have presented it to them a few times, they may feel confident enough to try it.

It is usual for babies to prefer sweet tastes but it is important to introduce savoury foods too in the early stages of weaning.

If a child refuses a meal it is best not to give food or milk in between meals.

Forcing your baby will never help him/her to like food. In fact it will eventually make feeding more difficult.

Give your child encouragement when he/she is eating well, or trying new foods, but don't comment on how much he/she has eaten. If they leave food, try not to get upset or anxious about this, just take the food away without drawing attention to it.

Children are quick to pick up on their parents' anxiety. When this happens at mealtimes they will become anxious too and are less likely to eat well.

Keep meal times to a maximum of 30 minutes.

Introducing early finger foods

These are foods which dissolve readily in the mouth and can be introduced before introducing lumpier consistencies. Try giving your child small pieces of maize based snacks like cheesy puffs or maize sticks, to encourage them to pick up small pieces of food and put them into his/her mouth. We recognise that these foods are not particularly healthy but this phase is hopefully short lived and will help your child gain confidence in early finger foods.



Moving on to lumps

Introducing lumps can be a more difficult stage, but do not be put off – the longer you leave it the more difficult it may become.

All babies should be offered lumps between 7-9 months.

Before giving lumps, gradually thicken puréed foods. This can be done by adding less liquid or by adding some powdered baby rice, instant mash or cooked potato to savoury dishes.

Introduce soft but small lumps e.g. ripe mashed banana, mashed peach or well mashed/partly liquidised soft home-made foods. You can also try well cooked split peas or lentils mixed with savoury baby food.

Move on to “stage 2” commercial baby food with lumps but check each new brand that you use to make sure they don’t have lumps which are too hard for your baby at this early stage

Your baby may cough, gag or heave a little, this is normal for many babies starting lumps. Do calmly encourage him/her. If you

panic, your baby may panic and become anxious too.

When your baby shows an interest in touching his/her food, it is important to allow food play as this helps them to learn about different foods and accept them more readily. You must be prepared for some mess as this is a very important stage in learning about food and eating!

If a baby can play with a new lumpy food with his/her fingers he/she can be more willing to put it in his/her mouth and then later take it from a spoon.

Give your child a spoon at meal times when they are able to hold it, even if they are not yet able to feed themselves.

Lumpy cereals with milk should be avoided initially. For example, rice based cereals that do not soak up milk and become soft, should be avoided as your baby may find it difficult to control the lumps and the runny liquid at the same time.

Other finger foods

Babies usually enjoy feeding themselves and will eat better when they feel more in control of the meal.

- Once your baby has started lumps he/she may also be able to manage a larger variety of finger foods; some babies will occasionally take finger foods even though they still gag on lumpy spoon-fed foods.
- Finger foods need to be encouraged as many babies prefer to feed themselves rather than always being spoon-fed.
- Finger foods that are more solid help develop chewing skills, if their introduction is delayed it may be more difficult to introduce them later on.
- Using fingers to feed themselves can also help your baby to develop hand skills.

When first introducing finger foods

- Never leave your baby unattended with food.
- Make sure your baby is well supported in their seat.
- Be careful with foods where small hard lumps may break off e.g. apples.
- Be careful with foods that don't mash properly and don't break up easily. e.g. orange segments - hold onto one end while baby sucks the other!

Other finger foods to try

- Ripe, peeled soft fruit e.g. banana, pear, and peach.
- Cooked soft vegetables e.g. carrot, courgette, parsnip.
- Fingers of buttered toast.
- Thin slices of cheese.
- Well-cooked pasta shapes.
- Rusks and baby biscuits.

Tell us, we're listening

Our staff want to know how they are doing. Tell us what you think at www.cnwl.nhs.uk/feedback and then we'll know what we have to do.

This information should only be used in conjunction with advice given by your Speech and Language Therapist. If you have any queries please contact our admin office on **01908 725299** who will put you in contact with a Speech and Language Therapist.



This document is also available in other languages, large print, Braille, and audio format upon request. Please email communications.cnwl@nhs.net

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku, w alfabecie Braille'a lub w formacie audio.

Polish

நீங்கள் கேட்டுக்கொண்டால், இந்த ஆவணம் வேறு மொழிகளிலும், பெரிய எழுத்து அச்சிலும் அல்லது ஒலிநாடா வடிவிலும் அளிக்கப்படும்.

Tamil

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔

Urdu

این مدرک همچنین بنا به درخواست به زبانهای دیگر، در چاپ درشت و در فرمت صوتی موجود است.

Farsi

Šį dokumentą paprašius taip pat galima gauti kitomis kalbomis, dideliu šriftu, Brailio raštu ir garso juostoje. Prašome kreiptis el.

Lithuanian

Mediante solicitação, este documento encontra-se também disponível noutras línguas, num formato de impressão maior, em Braille e em áudio.

Portuguese

Este documento también está disponible y puede solicitarse en otros idiomas, letra grande, braille y formato de audio.

Spanish

এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায়, বড় প্রিন্ট আকারে, ব্রেল এবং অডিও টেপ আকারেও অনুরোধ পাওয়া যায়

Bengali

Dokumentigaan waxaa xitaa lagu heli karaa luqado kale, daabacad far waa-wayn, farta indhoolaha (Braille) iyo hab dhegaysi ah markii la soo codsado.

Somali

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Russian