



# 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.

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## 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.

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## 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, beans, cooked egg, 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, textures, and flavors!

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### 4 Small soft pieces of food



**When I am ready, 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

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## 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 home-made 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.

## Recipes Using My WIC Baby Foods *(continued)*

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### 4. Soft Pieces—Snack

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



**California Department of Public Health, California WIC Program**

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