



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

Making Your Own Baby Food



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Making Your Own Baby Food

Making your own baby food can help you:

- offer more variety of food to your baby
- increase texture gradually
- control what is added to food
- introduce family foods
- save money



Getting Ready

Your baby will only need blended or finely mashed foods for a short time. A blender, food processor or food grinder will make the job easier for some foods like meat and chicken. As your baby learns to eat foods with more texture, a fork or potato masher works well.

Equipment You Will Need:

- Equipment to blend food e.g. Blender, food processor, food grinder, potato masher, wooden spoon and sieve
- Cutting board
- Saucepans
- Microwave safe dishes
- Knife
- Spoons
- Ice cube trays or cookie sheets
- Freezer bags
- Labels or markers

Before You Begin:

Before handling food and equipment:

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap.
2. Clean utensils and washable parts in a dishwasher. Or, hand wash them using hot, soapy water. Rinse well in hot tap water and air dry.
3. Clean counters and cutting boards with hot soapy water before and after preparing each food item.

Preparation and Storage

Follow the cooking instructions on page 8. Once baby food is made, store it right away in the fridge or freezer. Do not let food sit out at room temperature.

Prepared foods can be stored in the fridge for up to three days. Use a container with a tight fitting lid. To keep baby food longer than three days, freeze using the “Cube Method” or “Drop Method” described on page 6.



Cube Method

1. Fill each cube of a plastic “pop-out” ice cube tray with prepared food.
2. Cover with wax paper.
3. Place in freezer.
4. When frozen (about one to two hours), take cubes from the tray and store in a freezer bag.
5. Make sure all the air is out of the bag.
6. Label the bag with the name of the food and the date it was prepared.
7. Store bag at the back of freezer according to the chart “Storage Times for the Freezer” on page 7.



Drop Method

1. Take spoonfuls of prepared food and drop onto a cookie sheet. The size of each drop depends on how much your baby eats at one meal.
2. Cover with wax paper.
3. Place in freezer.
4. When frozen (about one to two hours), remove from cookie sheet and put in a freezer bag.
5. Make sure all the air is out of the bag.
6. Label the bag with the name of the food and the date it was prepared.
7. Store bag at the back of freezer according to the chart “Storage Times for the Freezer” on page 7.

Storage Times for the Freezer

FOOD	STORAGE TIME
Vegetables	3 months
Fruit	3 months
Cooked Meat, Poultry & Fish	1 month

Serving

Take out the amount of food you will need from the fridge or freezer. Thaw frozen food in the fridge overnight or in a microwave on the defrost setting in a microwave safe dish. **Never refreeze thawed baby food.**

Reheat food in a dish of hot water. An egg poacher or double-boiler can be used as well. Test the temperature on the back of your hand before serving it to your baby.

Microwave ovens heat food unevenly. Drops of water in the food heat quickly and form pockets of steam called "hot spots." This may cause burns when the food is eaten. If using a microwave to warm baby food:

- Transfer the food to a microwave-safe dish.
- Microwave on low heat for about 30 seconds.
- Stir well and test on the back of your hand.
- Continue heating on low for short intervals until the food is warm, not hot.
- Do not overheat.

Throw away any food left in a baby's bowl after the feeding.

Recipes

Vegetable Recipe

Ingredients

Fresh or frozen vegetables
Water



Method

1. Wash peel and slice vegetables or use frozen vegetables.
2. **Stovetop:** Place vegetables into a steamer or a small amount of boiling water and simmer just until tender. **Microwave:** Place vegetables in a microwave-safe bowl with a small amount of water and heat at a high setting until vegetables are tender.
3. Remove from heat and drain vegetables, reserving cooking liquid.
4. Blend or mash $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (200 mL) vegetables with 3-4 tbsp. (45-60 mL) of cooking liquid for 1-2 minutes.
5. Serve immediately or freeze as directed, (see page 6).

Fruit Recipe

Ingredients

Fresh or frozen fruit
Water



Method

1. Wash peel and/or seed and slice fruit or use frozen fruit.
2. **Stovetop:** Combine fruit and a small amount of water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 - 20 minutes until fruit is tender. **Microwave:** Place sliced fruit and a small amount of water in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat at a high setting until fruit is tender.
3. Drain cooked fruit, reserving the cooking liquid.
4. Blend or mash $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (75 - 125mL) fruit with 1 - 2 tsp. (5 - 10mL) of cooking liquid if needed.
5. Serve immediately or freeze as directed, (see page 6).

Legumes

Ingredients

250 mL (1 cup) cooked legumes (e.g. chick peas, split peas, navy bean or lentils), prepared according to package directions or drained and rinsed if using canned
30 mL (2 tbsp) water

Method

1. Blend or mash cooked legumes. Add the water until the mixture reaches desired thickness.
2. Serve immediately or freeze as directed, (see page 6).



Poached Fish

Ingredients

250g (½lb) deboned fish fillets (sole, cod, ocean perch, haddock)
125 mL (4 oz.) homogenized milk



Method

1. **Stovetop:** Pour milk into a large frying pan or saucepan and gently heat milk to just below boiling. Add fish fillets to milk. Cover with a lid or aluminum foil. Simmer over low heat for 5 - 10 minutes or until the fish flakes easily with a fork. **Microwave:** Place milk and fish fillets in a microwave-safe dish. Heat on high until fish flakes easily with a fork.
2. Remove from heat and cool slightly.
3. Blend or mash the fish with some of the milk used in cooking.
4. Serve immediately or freeze as directed, (see page 6).

Meat

Ingredients

500 g (1 lb.) of boneless lean tender beef
(e.g. top sirloin), cut into 2.5 cm (1 inch) cubes
500 mL (2 cups) water



Method

1. **Stovetop:** Place meat and water into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 45 minutes or until meat is tender. **Microwave:** Place meat and water in a microwave-safe bowl and heat at a high setting until meat is tender.
2. Remove from the heat and cool slightly.
3. Blend or mash $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) cubed meat with 3 - 4 tbsp. (45 - 60 mL) of the cooking liquid to desired consistency.
4. Serve immediately or freeze as directed, (see page 6).

Combination Dinners

Ingredients

125 mL ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) cubed, cooked meat,
fish or poultry
50 mL ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) cooked rice or potato
or pasta
50 mL ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) cooked vegetable pieces
50 mL ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup) breast milk or
homogenized milk



Method

1. Combine all ingredients and blend or mash to desired consistency. Some good combinations to try:
 - Beef, potatoes and peas
 - Beef, macaroni and squash
 - Chicken, rice and carrots
 - Liver, potatoes and green beans
2. Serve immediately or freeze as directed, (see page 6).

Poultry

Ingredients

1 - 1.5 kg (2 - 3 lbs.) chicken or turkey pieces
750 mL (3 cups) of water



Method

1. **Stovetop:** Place chicken or turkey and water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil then reduce heat and simmer until chicken or turkey is cooked and the meat separates easily from the bones (about 45 minutes - 1 hour). **Microwave:** Place chicken or turkey and water in a microwave-safe bowl and heat on high until chicken or turkey is cooked and meat separates easily from the bone.
2. Remove from the heat and cool slightly.
3. Remove the bones and skin from the chicken or turkey. Cut meat into small pieces.
4. Blend or mash 1/2 cup (125g) cubed chicken or turkey with 3 - 4 tbsp. (45 - 60 mL) of the cooking liquid to desired consistency.
5. Serve immediately or freeze as directed, (see page 6).



Baby's Sample Meal Pattern

Here is a sample meal pattern for a baby. **The amount of food is a guide only.** Some babies may not want this much. Others may be hungrier and need a bit more. Start with smaller amounts and work up to the larger amounts when your baby seems ready for more food.

Feeding	Between 4-5 Months	Between 6-7 Months	Between 8-10 Months	Between 11-12 Months
1	Breastmilk	Breastmilk	Breastmilk	Breastmilk
2	Breastmilk	Breastmilk 45-75 mL (3-5 tbsp.) infant cereal 15-30 mL (1-2 tbsp.) fruit	Breastmilk 60-90 mL (4-6 tbsp.) infant cereal 30-45 mL (2-3 tbsp.) fruit	Breastmilk 60-90 mL (4-6 tbsp.) infant cereal 45-60 mL (3-4 tbsp.) fruit
3	Breastmilk	Breastmilk 15-30mL (1-2 tbsp.) meat or meat alternatives 15-30mL (1-2 tbsp.) vegetables	Breastmilk 30-45 mL (2-3 tbsp.) meat or meat alternatives 30-45 mL (2-3 tbsp.) vegetables 30-45 mL (2-3 tbsp.) fruit	Breastmilk 45-60 mL (3-4 tbsp.) meat or meat alternatives 45-60 mL (3-4 tbsp.) vegetables 45-60 mL (3-4 tbsp.) fruit
4	Breastmilk	Breastmilk 45-75 mL (3-5 tbsp.) infant cereal	Breastmilk 60-90 mL (4-6 tbsp.) infant cereal 30-45 mL (2-3 tbsp.) vegetables 30-45 mL (2-3 tbsp.) fruit	Breastmilk 30-60 mL (2-4 tbsp.) meat or meat alternatives 45-60 mL (3-4 tbsp.) vegetables 45-60 mL (3-4 tbsp.) fruit



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Durham Health Connection Line
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729

durham.ca/health



If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.