



YOUR GUIDE TO

Early Introduction to Food and Food Allergens

Table of Contents

1. Food Allergy Basics	4
What are food allergies?	5
The Most Common Food Allergens	6
2. Introducing Food to Babies	8
When should I start solid food introduction?	9
How do I introduce solid foods?	10
3. The Signs of a Food Allergy	12
When to Call 911	14
4. Introducing Common Food Allergens	16
Ready when you are!	17
Start Small	18
Example Peanut Recipes	19
Sample Introduction Schedule	21
5. If Your Baby Has a Food Allergy	22
6. About Latitude	24
Food Introduction Log	26

1

Food Allergy Basics

What are food allergies?

Our immune system protects us by sending mediators to attack invaders like bacteria or viruses.

In the case of a food allergy, the immune system overreacts to a food protein and releases antibodies called Immunoglobulin E (or IgE).

This signals the body to treat the food protein as a threat and release mediators, which trigger an allergic reaction.



1 in 13 children has a food allergy & the prevalence is increasing*.

*Gupta, et al. Pediatrics 2018 [Gupta RS, Warren CM, Smith BM, Blumenstock JA, Jiang J, Davis MM, Nadeau KC. The Public Health Impact of Parent-Reported Childhood Food Allergies in the United States. Pediatrics 2018; 142(6):e20181235.]

The Most Common Food Allergens



These 9 allergens cause 90% of food allergic reactions³.

Early Introduction can reduce food allergy risk by up to 86%¹

In the U.S., in the late 90s and early 2000s, parents were told to avoid common food allergens, and food allergies soared. In other countries, there was no such guidance, snacks containing peanuts were normal, and peanut allergies were rare.

In 2015, the LEAP clinical trial demonstrated that exposure to peanuts between 4 & 11 months resulted in an **86% reduction in peanut allergies¹** compared to children who had no exposure.

Another study found a **75% reduction in peanut allergy²** with early introduction across all ethnicities and allergy risk profiles.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology (AAAAI) **recommend feeding a variety of foods - including food allergens - as soon as babies are developmentally ready for solid foods, typically around 4-6 months.**

¹Du Toit, et al, NEJM 2015 [George Du Toit, M.B., B.Ch., Graham Roberts, D.M., Peter H. Sayre, M.D., Ph.D., Henry T. Bahnson, M.P.H., Suzana Radulovic, M.D., Alexandra F. Santos, M.D., Helen A. Brough, M.B., B.S., +8, for the LEAP Study Team Published February 26, 2015 N Engl J Med 2015;372:803-813 DOI: 10.1056/NEJMoal414850 VOL. 372 NO. 9]

²Logan, et al, Allergy 2023 [Logan K, Bahnson HT, Ylescupidez A, Beyer K, Bellach J, Campbell DE, Craven J, Du Toit G, Clare Mills EN, Perkin MR, Roberts G, van Ree R, Lack G. Early introduction of peanut reduces peanut allergy across risk groups in pooled and causal inference analyses. Allergy. 2023 May;78(5):1307-1318. doi: 10.1111/all.15597. Epub 2022 Dec 11. PMID: 36435990; PMCID: PMC10202125.]

³FDA statistics from Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education and Research (FASTER) Act of 2021 and the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) of 2004

2

Introducing Food to Babies

When should I start solid food introduction?

Look for these signs that your child is developmentally ready for solid foods, typically between 4 and 6 months:

- Sits up alone or with support.
- Is able to control head and neck.
- Opens the mouth when food is offered.
- Swallows food rather than pushes it back out onto the chin.
- Brings objects to the mouth.
- Tries to grasp small objects, such as toys or food.



Use
pre-prepared
options or make
your own puree
or mash



Is my baby at risk for food allergies?

Before starting, consider if your baby is at risk for food allergies*.

Risk factors include:

- Moderate to severe eczema.
- Family history of food allergies.
- Confirmed allergy to eggs.

*Consult your pediatrician or allergist before starting if your baby is at risk.

How do I introduce solid foods?

- Start with single, low-risk foods like cooked or pureed sweet potatoes, carrots, or pears to get used to solid food.
- Introduce new foods regularly.
- It may take multiple attempts before your baby will eat newly introduced foods.
- Progress from pureed foods to small bites after 2 months or so.
- Don't wait to introduce allergens.

3

The Signs of a Food Allergy

What are the signs of a food allergy in a baby?

Symptoms can begin within **minutes to two hours** after eating the food.

If your baby is allergic, they may show mild reactions such as a few hives or a rash, redness around the eyes, or vomiting. If that occurs, we recommend contacting your pediatrician immediately and making an appointment with an allergist that specializes in food allergies. Severe reactions are rare in babies. However, it's important to know the signs.

Irritation or allergic reaction? Redness around the mouth is usually a skin irritation, not an allergic reaction. Irritation or a mild rash often fades within minutes. If you're unsure, or if the rash lingers or worsens, check in with your pediatrician. Foods that occasionally cause temporary skin irritation include citrus fruits, tomatoes, strawberries, and high-salicylate foods like cinnamon.



When to Call 911

Severe reactions are rare in babies. However, it's important to know the signs. **Call 911 if 2 or more body systems show a moderate reaction, or 1 system with a severe reaction.**

Brain



Sudden tiredness, appearing limp, weak, or unusually sleepy

Unusual irritability or inconsolable crying

Breathing



Difficulty breathing

Dry cough

Wheezing

Face



New rash, or raised bumps around the face (mouth/eyes)

Lip, face, or tongue swelling

Trouble swallowing

Stomach



Persistent vomiting

Nausea

Loose stools

Circulation



Fast heartbeat

Change in appearance (color) of skin, fingertips, or tongue

Skin



On darker skin, hives appear as raised bumps; color changes may not be as obvious

On lighter skin, hives appear as raised red bumps

4

Introducing Common Food Allergens

Ready when you are!

Before you begin:

- Choose one food to introduce.
- Gather the ingredients or use a pre-made baby-safe option.
- Review the signs of an allergic reaction.
- Have liquid antihistamine (like Zyrtec) on hand, if recommended by your pediatrician.

Plan for a calm and safe environment:

- Baby is healthy (no fever or cold).
- It's a regular feeding time.
- You're at home or in a familiar, calm setting.
- At least one adult is focused on the infant—without distractions from other children or household activities.
- Monitor for about 2 hours after food is introduced.





Start Small

How to introduce a new allergen:

1. Mix a small amount (about 2 teaspoons) of the allergen with breastmilk, formula, water, or a tolerated food (like banana or pureed vegetables).
2. Offer a tiny amount (about ¼ teaspoon) of the mixture.
3. Wait 10 minutes and observe for any signs of reaction.
4. If no reaction occurs, continue feeding the full portion at a normal pace.
5. Monitor your baby closely for the next 2 hours.



Introduce **only one new food** every 1–2 days so you can track any potential reaction clearly.

Example Peanut Recipes

Peanut Butter Drizzle

2 tsp smooth peanut butter

3 tsp hot water, breastmilk, or formula

Stir until dissolved. Let cool. Add more liquid if needed.

Mini PB&B Smoothie

2 tsp smooth peanut butter

4 tsp pureed banana

Stir well and serve.

Peanut Flour Mixer

2 tsp peanut flour

6 tsp tolerated pureed fruit or vegetable

Stir well and serve.

Continue to introduce new foods

- Introduce foods one at a time, every day or two.
- Keep trying! It can take many times of trying a new food for an infant to accept it. Be patient and don't force it. Feeding should be fun!
- To maintain tolerance, incorporate tolerated foods into diet 2-3 times per week.
- Continue to provide a diverse diet, including tolerated allergens, to your infant and toddler throughout their early years to ensure their immune system learns to tolerate the food long-term. As your baby grows, be sure to slowly increase what they are eating to age-appropriate serving sizes.

Note: Tree nuts include cashews, pistachios, walnuts, pecans, almonds, hazelnuts, brazil nuts, and macadamia nuts. Cashews and pistachios and walnuts & pecans are closely related. However, we recommend introducing all four starting with cashew and walnut.



Add nut butter to pancakes or muffins

Nut butter added to oatmeal, yogurt or puree



Fun Ways to Introduce Nuts to Babies.



Small amount of nut butter on a spoon



Thin spread of nut butter on a toast finger

Sample Introduction Schedule

1

Peanuts

2 tsp smooth peanut butter mixed with water, breastmilk, or puree

2

Eggs (fully cooked)

2 tsp well-done scrambled eggs

3

Wheat

¼ c baby cereal mixed with water or breastmilk

4

Dairy

2 tsp plain, full-fat yogurt or cottage cheese plain or mixed with fruit purees or mashed vegetables.

5

Sesame

2 tsp tahini mixed into puree

6

Cashews

2 tsp cashew butter mixed with water, breastmilk, or puree

7

Soy

Tofu pureed with vegetables or fruit, or mixed with fortified infant cereal, Steamed and mashed shelled edamame puree

8

Fish

Well-done fish cut in tiny pieces

9

Shellfish

Well-done shrimp cut in tiny pieces

Continue on with other tree nuts: cashew, pistachio, walnut, hazelnuts, pecans, macadamia nuts.

5

If Your Baby Has a Food Allergy

What should I do if I suspect my baby has a food allergy?

If you suspect your baby has a food allergy, start by avoiding that food. Consult an allergist, preferably one who specializes in food allergies. The allergist will typically review the clinical history and then suggest appropriate testing to identify or confirm the food allergy. Be sure to jot down what food the baby ate and what the reaction was, and bring that to your appointment.

Complete testing may include:

- Clinical history,
- Skin prick test,
- Bloodwork, and
- Oral food challenge, if needed

Treatment for food allergies is available. If a food allergy is confirmed, your allergist can guide you through treatment options. Oral immunotherapy (OIT) gently retrains the body to tolerate food allergens, and starting early can make it especially effective. At Latitude, **OIT is 97% effective** in babies and toddlers. With treatment, children are protected from accidental exposures, parents can feel more at ease, and many kids grow up able to enjoy all foods freely.

Be sure to also talk to your doctor about how other common food allergens should continue to be introduced into your baby's diet.



6

About Latitude

At Latitude Food Allergy Care, we focus 100% on food allergy testing, treatment and care

Latitude has successfully cared for thousands of patients, providing them with relief from food allergies.

- Testing to provide you with the answers you need quickly.
- Treatment for single and multiple food allergies, personalized for each patient.
- Expert clinical team led by board-certified allergists.
- Most insurance plans accepted.
- Our clinics are specially designed by food allergy moms for food allergy families



**San Francisco
Bay Area**

**Southern
California**

**New York
City**

To find a location near you, visit

LatitudeFoodAllergyCare.com

or call

(888) 528-1592

