Yes We Can! Make Homemade Baby Food!



Produced by the Alabama Department of Public Health Video Communications and Distance Learning Division

Faculty

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What are the Benefits?

- · Know what's in the food
- More economical
- Healthier (usually)
- · Serve what the family eats
- · Include baby in family meals
- Expose baby to greater variety of foods

Safety Issues to Ponder

- Infant immune system
- Choking hazards
- Nitrates
- Preventing food borne illness

Infant Immune System

The nonspecific (innate) immunity is not fully developed in the first year of life.

Infant Immune System



- Maturation of the infant gut is affected by breastfeeding
- More probiotics are present in the gut of breastfed infants

Choking Hazards

- Signs of developmental readiness
 - Sits with minimal support and can hold head up
 - -Loss of tongue thrust reflex
 - -Interested in eating
- Correct texture for acceptance
- Responsive feeding

Nitrates

- Not really an issue if high nitrate foods are not given to infants under 3 months
- · Breastfed infants protected
- Foods highest in nitrates include spinach and other leafy greens, green beans, carrots, squash and beets
- Nitrate content of fresh vegetables can increase with storage, especially at room temperature

Preventing Food Borne Illness



First: AVOID *unsafe* Ingredients

- Honey (risk for botulism)
- Home canned food (may contain harmful bacteria if it was canned improperly)
- Raw, unpasteurized milk or foods made with it

First: AVOID *unsafe* Ingredients

- · Outdated canned food
- Food from dented, rusted, bulging, or leaking cans or jars
- Food from cans or jars without labels

Practice the Usual Food Safety Routines

- Clean
- Separate
- Cook
- Chill

CLEAN

- Hands
 - -Use warm water, soap and nailbrush
 - -Cover cuts with a bandage or gloves



CLEAN

- Hands
 - Wash hands before and during preparation if in contact with raw meats, etc., or if you use hands to cover cough or blow nose; or use the restroom
 - -Wash hands long enough! Happy
 Birthday song, twice

CLEAN: Counters





CLEAN: Produce Removes Dirt, Pesticides, and Bacteria

- Produce should be washed under running water at least 30 seconds
- Even organic and produce that will be peeled should be washed
- Scrub firm produce like melon with a clean brush

CLEAN: Produce

Some produce is better cleaned in a colander or a bowl of fresh water, such as leafy greens, grapes and strawberries.

CLEAN: Produce

- Don't use detergents or bleach solutions
- Vinegar rinse has shown to be effective in reducing bacteria on produce
 - -1:3 ratio of white vinegar to water
 - -Spray, rub for 30 seconds and rinse
 - Soak leafy greens and broccoli, etc.
 and rinse well

CLEAN: Cleaning Items

- Sponges
 - Microwave, dishwasher or bleach solution
- Dishrags and hand towels
 - -Replace daily, use bleach solution
- Dish and produce brushes
 - -Wash in the dishwasher

SEPARATE

- Keep produce separate from raw meat, chicken, fish, etc. at the grocery store and at home
- Avoid meat juices spilling in the refrigerator



- Use separate cutting boards for raw meats, etc. and food that is ready to eat
- Use a different plate to hold cooked food than plate used to hold raw meats, etc.



COOK

- Cook to safe internal temperatures:
 - -All meats At least 160°F
 - -Fish To at least 145°F
 - -All white meat poultry to at least 165°F
- Other food: until steaming and then cool

COOK

- Encourage food thermometer use
- Avoid "Danger Zone": 40°-140° F
- Thoroughly reheat refrigerated or frozen food to an internal temperature of 165°F

COOK

- Cook food until it is soft enough to puree
- If undercooked, it could have lumps and may be more difficult for baby to handle

CHILL

 Refrigerate foods immediately after cooking



 Do not store prepared baby food in the refrigerator for more than 24 hours for meat, poultry, fish, and eggs or more than 48 hours for fruits and vegetables (foodsafety.gov)

Refrigerator / Freezer Storage Chart

- Download a refrigerator / freezer storage chart at
 - http://www.homefoodsa fety.org/downloads/kee p-it-cool-storage-chart



Refrigerator / Freezer Storage Chart

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CHILL

- Keep refrigerator at or < 40°F; freezer at 0°F or less
- Don't thaw foods on the counter
- Refrigerate foods immediately after cooking
- Don't allow to be at room temperature for more than 2 hours;
 1 hour when temperature is > 90°F

CHILL

 Serve a small portion into baby's bowl, refrigerate the rest and discard what's left at the end of feeding



Food Safety Resources

- · www.homefoodsafety.org
- · www.foodsafety.gov

KISS!

- KEEP
- IT
- SIMPLE
- SALLY!



What Do You Need?

- A fork
- A potato masher



- A blender or food processor or
 - -Stick (immersion) blender
 - Baby food mill
 - -Baby Bullet

What Do You Need?

- · Something to freeze in or on
 - -Ice cube tray
 - -Cookie sheet



What NOT to ADD

- Honey
- Sugar
- Salt
- Hot spices / chile (at least not at first)

What About Herbs and Spices, Onion, Garlic, Etc.?

Treat like any other new food.



Remember to wait 3 - 5 days between new foods to check for allergy.

Signs of Allergy: From AAP healthychildren.org

- Skin problems
 - Hives (red spots that look like mosquito bites)
 - -Itchy skin rashes (eczema, also called atopic dermatitis)
 - -Swelling

Signs of Allergy: From AAP healthychildren.org

- · Breathing problems
 - -Sneezing
 - -Wheezing
 - -Throat tightness

Signs of Allergy: From AAP healthychildren.org

- Stomach symptoms
 - -Nausea
 - -Vomiting
 - Diarrhea

Signs of Allergy: From AAP healthychildren.org

- Circulation symptoms
 - -Pale skin
 - -Light headedness
 - -Loss of consciousness
- Resource for Food Allergies: Food Allergy Research and Education
 - -foodallergy.org

What About the Top Allergenic Foods?

- Can be introduced between 4 6 months of age, after a few other foods have been tolerated
- Introducing any foods before 4 months is associated with higher incidence of atopic dermatitis up to 10 years later

What About the Top Allergenic Foods?

Delayed introduction, especially allergenic foods, may increase the risk of food allergy or eczema.

(American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, Immunology. Fleicher DM et al. J Allergy Clinical Immunol: In practice. 2013.)

Cooking Tips

- Cook with as little water as possible
 - -Retains more vitamins
 - Vitamins lost in the water can be added back
- Steaming
- Microwaving little or no water needed

Cooking Tips

- Canned foods
 - -Buy unsalted or rinse well
 - -Buy unsweetened or rinse well

LET'S MAKE SOME BABY FOOD!