

# HUNTINGTON PLAZA PEDIATRIC GROUP

## INTRODUCING SOLID FOODS

### When can my baby eat solids?

Most babies are ready to eat solids between 4 and 6 months of age. At this age babies have improved head control, as well as tongue and mouth coordination. Also energy needs increase at this age, making this an ideal time to introduce solids. However, children with a family history of allergies should start later (around 6 months).

### 4-8 months

Start with rice cereal, oatmeal or barley. It is a good idea to give your child mixed cereals last, since they may cause allergic reactions. Mix the rice cereal with breast milk or formula and always feed it to your baby with a spoon. Your child will let you know how much he/she wants, follow their cues.

After your child tolerates 3-4 days of cereal introduce vegetables and fruits. Introduce a new vegetable or fruit every 3-4 days (one new food at a time). Watch for signs of an allergic reaction including diarrhea, rash, or vomiting. If any of these occur, stop using the new food and notify your pediatrician. Within 2-3 months of starting solid foods, your baby will be eating three solid meals per day.

### 8-10 months

Encourage finger foods. This is a good time to introduce meat, dairy products (but not cow's milk), and egg yolks. Your baby's formula intake will most likely decrease from 28-32 oz per day to 20-24 oz per day, and breastfeeding may decrease to 4-5 times per day. This is also a good time to introduce a cup.

### 10-12 months

Your baby's diet should now include nearly all table foods, except those listed below.

***Do not give honey, whole milk, citrus (including oranges, lemon, limes, pineapple, strawberries, and tomato), egg whites, or fish prior to 1 year of age.***

***Avoid nuts, popcorn, chewing gum, whole grapes or carrots, hard candy, and hotdogs until at least 4 years of age due to the risk of choking.***

Remember, these are just guidelines. Follow your baby's cues and make meals fun. This is a special time for you and your baby.