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Finger Foods for Babies 6 – 12 months of Age

Babies learn to chew food with their gums before their first tooth comes in. At this age, they also learn to pick up things and bring them to their mouth. This is a good time to offer finger foods for your baby. Babies enjoy finger foods, and it's normal for them to be messy as they learn to eat.



Signs of readiness for finger foods

- When your baby is comfortable eating thickened infant cereal and soft, mashed foods from a spoon, he may be ready to try finger foods.
- When your baby grabs the spoon while you are feeding him; when he shows interest in what you are eating; when he tries to take food from your plate.
- It is common for a baby to refuse spoon-feeding and to prefer feeding himself.
- At first your baby may just scoop up the food in her fist, but she will soon learn to pick up pieces using her thumb and forefinger.

To prevent choking

- Sit down with your baby while he eats. Never leave him by himself while he is eating.
- Sit your child in a high chair to eat.
- Avoid giving your baby foods that can cause choking. Some of these foods are nuts, seeds, raw vegetables, globs of nut or seed butters, raisins, popcorn, olives, ice cubes, chips, gum, marshmallows, hard candies and jelly beans.
- Cut round foods like cooked carrots, grapes and hot dogs in 4 pieces lengthwise and then into small pieces.



Note: Gagging is normal and is not the same as choking. Gagging may happen as baby learns to control food in her mouth.

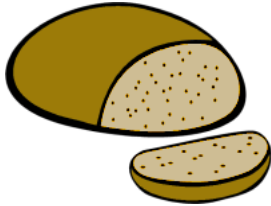
**Offer your baby a variety of foods from all four food groups in
Canada's Food Guide**

Vegetables and Fruit



**Pieces of soft, ripe fruit without peel or skin:
Avocado, banana, peach, pear, kiwi, mango, melon**

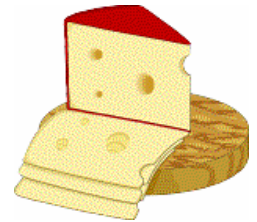
**Pieces of soft, cooked vegetables:
Cooked broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, green beans, squash, yam, zucchini**



Grain Products

**Cooked pasta – macaroni, rotini, penne
Cooked rice
Whole wheat bread toasted with crusts removed
Pieces of roti, tortilla or pancake
Oat ring cereal, Cheerios® (unsweetened) or Nutrios®**

**Milk & Alternatives
(Around 9 months of age)**



**Grated or small cubes of pasteurized cheese such as cheddar,
mozzarella, edam**



Meat & Alternatives

**Soft, well cooked pieces of chicken or turkey
Ground or chopped beef, pork or lamb
Flaked fish (no bones)
Soft, cooked lentils and small beans (black, navy)
Soy products like cubed firm tofu
Chopped hard cooked egg (yolk only until 12 months of age)**

*If you have questions about your child's nutrition, contact the
Public Health Dietitian at your local Public Health Unit.*

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