



kids therapy made simple

Introducing Solids

Is your child ready for solids?

From the time your child is born your job is to ensure they are fed. Seems pretty straight forward at first. They either breast feed or drink breast milk or formula from a bottle

But suddenly you blink and your child is 6 months old. Now what? They may have teeth, they may be able to sit independently, and they may be reaching for whatever delicious item of food you are eating.

Before you move to any pureed/solids, consult with your pediatrician. Once you get the thumbs up from them to move forward, here are some tips that may make the transition a little easier for you and your little one.

Important Pointers Before Beginning

- Your child should be able to **sit independently** (upright) with good head control in an appropriate chair.
- Decide which meal you are going to use to introduce food. Since your child still receives a majority of their calories from breast milk or formula, the beginning stages of feeding are really meant for **exposure**.
- **Start slowly** and don't expect too much. Your child may refuse the new item several times before they feel comfortable enough to begin exploring. It may take over 10 times until your child determines whether or not they like this new food.
- Begin by introducing **one food at a time**. Wait at least 3-4 days in between foods so that you can monitor your child's reactions and any possible sensitivities or allergies they may have.



The Messy Stage

Introducing solids is not a clean experience. You should expect for the next couple of years to be filled with food **EVERYWHERE**. I'm talking all over your child's clothes, in their hair, on their high chair...you name it, you're likely to find leftovers from your child's meal there.

If your child grabs for the spoon, let them have it. Let them chew on it, poke their food with it, etc. Sometimes I encourage parents to sit down for a meal with 2 spoons - one for the child and one for the parent.

Let your child explore their food with their fingers and let them play with it. They are **EXPERIENCING** their meal. The experience of a meal is much more than how it tastes.

The Takeaway

HAVE FUN!

This is a whole new experience for both you and your child. I know it can sometimes be frustrating, but the more you relax and allow your child to taste and explore while engaging in a positive, fun experience, the better off you will be.

At some point during toddler hood all children's food preferences change. It's ok. They may no longer enjoy the avocado that they once loved. As long as you and your pediatrician are on the same page and your child is continuing to thrive and grow, try to relax and enjoy this new phase in life.

