

## Foods to Support Catch-Up Growth for Infants

Infants can start solids from around 4-6 months of age when they are showing signs they are ready. The amount of food and how often they eat will increase over time.

See the '[Baby's First Foods Brochure](#)' for information on when and how to introduce solids, and what to offer.

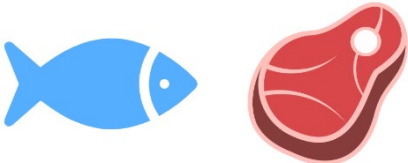
Some babies need extra energy and protein to help them gain weight faster, known as 'catch-up growth'. Use this resource to help you choose foods for your infant's diet to help them grow and develop.


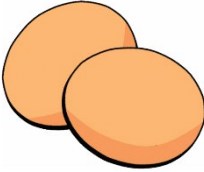


### Why does my baby need this diet?

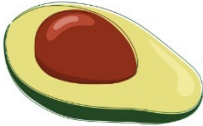


Your baby might need a high protein and high energy diet because they:

- Are not growing or gaining weight as expected.
- Have difficulties eating and/or drinking enough.
- Have a medical condition with higher nutrition requirements.
- Have a short or long-term illness.

### How do I add extra energy and protein to my baby's meals and snacks?

High energy or protein food/drink	Ideas on how to use
<p><b>Meat and seafood</b> E.g. Beef, lamb, pork, chicken, fish, prawns, crab.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add in meals by pureeing, slow cooking or making mince into meatballs.</li> <li>• Use high fat sauces such as carbonara or creamy mushroom.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Smooth nut and seed pastes</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread thickly on bread/toast, biscuits or crackers.</li> <li>• Add into pureed foods.</li> <li>• Mix into infant rice cereal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Eggs</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make scrambled eggs or omelettes with butter, cream, or cheese.</li> <li>• Serve fried or boiled on toast with butter, margarine, or avocado.</li> <li>• Try French toast instead of plain toast by dipping the bread in an egg/milk mixture before cooking.</li> <li>• Use as a binder in foods like meatballs.</li> <li>• Offer mini quiches or hard-boiled egg as a snack.</li> <li>• Add to meals such as mince or rice dishes.</li> <li>• Mix with mayonnaise to use as a spread or dip.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Legumes and tofu</b> E.g. Edamame, baked beans, chickpeas, kidney, butter, black, cannellini, borlotti beans.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve baked beans on buttered toast with grated cheese.</li> <li>• Serve dahl with plain yoghurt or cottage cheese.</li> <li>• Spread hummus thickly on bread, toast or crackers.</li> <li>• Blend into puree/mashed foods.</li> <li>• Cook soft tofu sticks (e.g. baked or lightly fried).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dairy products</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose full fat over reduced fat versions.</li> <li>• Serve yoghurt or custard with fruit/fruit purees.</li> <li>• Add cream to cereals such as porridge or infant rice cereal.</li> <li>• Melt cheese onto vegetables, potato, and pastas.</li> <li>• Serve creamy dips such as tzatziki, cream cheese, or sour cream-based dips.</li> <li>• Add cream, sour cream, plain Greek yoghurt or coconut cream to meals (e.g. soups, casseroles, sauces and vegetable purees including mashed potato).</li> <li>• Offer cheese sticks, cubes or grated cheese as a snack.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Avocado</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use in sandwiches or on toast.</li> <li>• Use guacamole as a dip or spread on biscuits.</li> <li>• Puree or mash to mix into fruit, vegetables, infant rice cereal and pureed food.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Breast milk or formula</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use breast milk or formula instead of water when making pureed food or infant cereal.</li> <li>• Use formula to make custard.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oils, margarine, and butter</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fry or bake foods in oil, margarine, or butter.</li> <li>• Add to pureed foods including meats, seafood, vegetables, stews, pre-prepared baby food.</li> <li>• Drizzle or melt over the top of meals including vegetables, noodles, potato, and pasta.</li> <li>• Spread butter or margarine thickly on sandwiches, toast, crackers, and biscuits.</li> </ul>

### How much extra should I add?

Ask your dietitian before adding extras to your baby's food, to check the amount is right.

General guidelines are:

	Amount of food	Amount to add
<b>First foods</b>	2 tablespoons of pureed or mashed vegetables and/or meat	2 teaspoons of margarine, butter, or oil
<b>Soft foods</b>	½ cup of baked beans or spaghetti	1 tablespoon of grated cheese
	½ cup of cereal	2 tablespoons of cream
	½ cup of cooked pasta or noodles, rice, or vegetables	1 tablespoon of butter/margarine/oil

## What foods should I avoid giving my baby?

- **Honey** contains a bacteria that can be harmful to infants under 12 months old.
- **Whole nuts** are a choking risk.
- **Low nutrient foods** such as hot chips, chocolate and lollies. They are low in vitamins and minerals, and can reduce your child's appetite for other important foods.
- **Fruit juice, cordial and soft drinks** are high in sugar and have low nutritional value. They can damage teeth and reduce your child's appetite for important foods.

**Caffeinated drinks** such as tea and coffee are not suitable for infants and children.

**Please note:** See your doctor and/or dietitian to help track your child's growth. Once your child's growth has caught up, you can stop adding extra energy and protein to their diet.

**For further information contact your dietitian:** \_\_\_\_\_