

High energy and protein for 6 to 12 month olds

To help your baby or toddler to grow and develop they need to eat and drink enough energy, protein and nutrients. Protein is especially important for growth.

WHY DOES MY BABY NEED THIS DIET?

Your baby needs a high protein and high energy diet because they:

- Are not growing or gaining weight as expected
- Are not eating/drinking enough
- Have a medical condition with higher requirements

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY CHILD GROW AND DEVELOP?

- Choose foods high in energy and protein.
- Add extra energy and protein to their food.

WHAT FOODS ARE HIGH IN ENERGY?

- Butter, margarine, oil and avocado
- Cream, sour cream
- Creamy sauces- mayonnaise, aioli, carbonara, cheese sauce

WHAT FOODS ARE HIGH IN PROTEIN?

- Meat, Chicken, Fish
- Eggs
- Regular, full fat dairy foods such as milk, cheese, yoghurt and custard.
- Smooth nut or seed pastes, including peanut butter, almond butter, tahini. (Note. whole nuts or 'crunchy' spreads are a choking risk).
- Legumes which are foods like baked beans, chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans, butter beans, black beans, cannellini beans, borlotti beans and bean mixes.
- Tofu or soy products

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO PROVIDE MY BABY WITH A HIGH ENERGY, HIGH PROTEIN DIET?

- Your baby's main food and drink should be breast milk or infant formula until at least 12 months of age.
- Offer solid food more often as your baby gets older. Ask your dietitian or speech pathologist for advice for your child. A general guide is:
 - Start solids around 6 months of age (between 4-7 months depending on how ready they are).
 - Increase the number of times you offer solids from once per day to 3 times per day over the first month.
 - By 9 months of age start to offer solid food before breastfeeds or infant formula.
 - By 12 months of age your child should be eating three small meals, and two small snacks a day. A common meal plan includes: breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and dinner. Try to plan meals and snacks around naps.
- Include a high protein food at every solid meal.
- Add extra protein and energy to the food offered (see table for ideas).
- Include foods high in iron as their first foods from 6 months of age.

High iron foods include:

 - Meat, Fish, Chicken
 - Eggs
 - Legumes
 - Iron-fortified baby cereals
- Offer two-course meals:
 - Cereal or toast followed by fruit or yoghurt for breakfast.
 - Meat & vegetables followed by dessert at lunch and dinner.

HOW DO I ADD EXTRA ENERGY AND PROTEIN TO MY BABY'S MEALS AND SNACKS?

High energy and protein food/drink	Meal/snack ideas & how to use
Breast milk or Baby formula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use breast milk or formula instead of water or milk when making pureed baby food. Examples include meat, vegetables, family meals, fruit and baby cereal. • Use formula to make custard • Your dietitian may give you a special recipe for preparing formula or adding to your breast milk.
Meat- beef, lamb, pork, chicken, fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook in good amounts of oil. • Add butter, oil or cheese to pureed food. • Use high fat sauces. Meal examples include: lasagne, stroganoff or creamy mushroom.
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fry eggs in lots of margarine, butter or oil. • Offer scrambled eggs as a meal. Add butter, cream or cheese for extra energy. • Make French toast (bread dipped in egg & milk mixture and then fried) instead of plain toast. • Use as a binder in foods like meatballs. • Offer mini quiches or hard-boiled egg as a snack. • Make traditional custard using egg. • Serve with toast and lots of butter, margarine or avocado.
Legumes- Baked beans, chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans, butter beans, black beans, cannellini beans, borlotti beans and bean mixes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mashed or pureed depending on your child's developmental stage. Add extra oil or cheese. • Serve baked beans on toast with lots of butter or margarine and grated cheese. • Add extra oil to dhal and serve with plain yoghurt or cottage cheese. • Spread a lot of hummus on bread, toast or crackers.
Smooth nut & seed pastes (from 6 months of age)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread a lot on toast or crackers. • Add into pureed foods.
Full fat dairy (cow's milk) products: full cream milk or yoghurt and custard made on full cream milk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose full fat yoghurt or custard regularly for desserts or snacks. • Serve yoghurt or custard with fruit/fruit purees.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add milk or yoghurt to cereals. • Serve tzatziki dip with soft-cooked vegetable sticks or crackers. • If your child can not have cows milk discuss the best alternative option with the dietitian. Many other 'milk' options are low in protein and energy.
Cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose cheese slices or sticks as a snack. • Grate and add to pureed meals. • Grate and add to mini quiches, omelettes, mashed potato. • Grate over pasta, rice, casseroles, eggs, baked beans & spaghetti. • Melt on toast. • Serve cream cheese or cottage cheese on sandwiches, toast or crackers.
Avocado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use in sandwiches or on toast. • Use guacamole as a dip or spread on biscuits. • Puree or mash and mix into fruit, vegetables and pureed food.
Cream and sour cream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add cream to cereals like porridge, quick oats or baby cereal. • Serve fruit with cream • Add cream or sour cream to vegetable purees, including mashed potato. • Add to soup and casseroles. • Sour cream-based dips for softly cooked vegetable sticks or crackers.
Oils, margarine and butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fry or bake foods in oil, margarine or butter. • Add to baby cereal. • Add to pureed meals including vegetables, stews, pre-prepared baby food. • Drizzle or melt over the top of meals including vegetables, noodles and pasta. • Spread lots of butter or margarine on sandwiches, toast, crackers and biscuits.

HOW MUCH CHEESE, BUTTER, MARGARINE OR OIL DO I ADD?

Ask your dietitian before starting these additions to ensure the amount is appropriate for your baby's situation. General guidelines are:

	Amount of food	Energy and protein addition
First foods	2 tablespoons of pureed or mashed vegetables and/or meat.	2 teaspoons of margarine or oil
Soft foods	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

For further information contact your Dietitian or Nutritionist:
