

# INTRODUCING THE TOP 9

A no-stress guide to introducing food allergens to your infant.

## WHAT ARE THE TOP 9 ALLERGENS?

**MILK**

**EGGS**

**WHEAT**

**SHELLFISH**

**FISH**

**TREE NUTS**

**PEANUTS**

**SOY**

**SESAME**

## WHY SHOULD YOU INTRODUCE ALLERGENS EARLY?

Research shows that introducing the top 9 allergens around 6 months can help avoid food allergies.



## WHEN SHOULD YOU INTRODUCE ALLERGENS?

Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Parent/Sibling has Food Allergies
Baby does not have eczema or a known food allergy.	Baby has mild to moderate eczema.	Baby has severe eczema, egg allergy or both.	Sibling has a food allergy or parent has a food allergy.
Introduce at 6 months	Introduce at 6 months.  It can be done at home or in an office setting.  Discuss with your health care provider.	Check with your doctor first.  Your doctor may suggest a blood test or send you to an allergy specialist for additional testing.  If test results are negative, introduce allergens at 4-6 months at home or office.  If test results are positive, avoid introduction.	Research shows no connection between siblings and food allergies.  If a sibling has a food allergy, introduce the food.  If a parent has a food allergy and the baby does not have severe eczema, try to introduce the food as well.

## HOW SHOULD YOU INTRODUCE ALLERGENS?

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### **Start with low-risk foods.**

- A “top 9” food allergen should not be one of the first foods you feed baby.
- Start with meats or iron-fortified cereal, and then move on to fruits and vegetables before introducing a “top 9” food.

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### **Introduce one new food at a time & early in the day.**

- If baby does have a reaction, you will want to make sure you will be able to pinpoint what caused it. After 3-5 days you can introduce the next allergen.
- You want to be able to observe baby throughout the day and monitor for a reaction.
  - Feeding baby a “top 9” allergen at night and going to bed is not recommended.
- Provide a small amount of the allergen in a way that is easy for baby to eat.
  - Example: Peanut butter mixed with 2-3 tsp water or breastmilk, smoothed onto a rice cake.

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### **Watch for a reaction.**

- Feed and observe baby. If no reaction, continue to feed.
- Lip swelling, vomiting, widespread hives, face, or tongue swelling, wheezing, or repetitive coughing are severe reactions.
- Difficulty breathing is rare but possible. If baby has difficulty breathing call 911.

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### **Be repetitive.**

- If no reaction, continue to feed baby the top 9 foods as often as possible.

## HOW TO INTRODUCE...

### **Peanuts**

- 1 tsp peanut butter with 1 tsp water.
- 1 tsp peanut butter mixed in with ½ cup rice cereal.

### **Milk**

- 2 oz yogurt.
- 1 tbsp plain cottage cheese smeared on a rice cake.

### **Eggs**

- Scrambled eggs.
- Hard-boiled egg mashed with a fork.

### **Soy**

- Tofu mashed with a fork.
- Edamame soft-boiled and mashed with a fork.

### **Tree Nuts**

- 1 tsp almond butter mixed with 1 tsp water.
- 1 tsp almond butter mixed in 4 oz plain yogurt.

### **Shellfish**

- Minced boiled shrimp.
- Boiled scallops mashed with a fork.

### **Fish**

- Salmon burger grilled and mashed with a fork.
- 2 oz mashed cod fillet.

### **Sesame**

- 1 tsp tahini mixed with 1 tsp water.
- 1 tsp hummus made with sesame.

### **Wheat**

- 4 oz cream of wheat.
- Wheat-based cereal softened with water.

### **For more information, visit the following websites:**

1. <https://www.childrensmc.org/parent-ish/2022/05/newfoodallergy/>
2. <https://www.preventallergies.org/>
3. <https://kidswithfoodallergies.org/>