

## Feeding Your Baby

# Common Food Allergens

### What are common food allergens?

Common food allergens are those foods that people are more likely to be allergic to.



Eggs



Shellfish



Milk\*



Soy\*



Wheat



Peanuts



Sesame



Tree nuts



Fish



Mustard

### How to introduce common food allergens

- 1 Breastfeeding may be protective against the development of food allergies. Breastfeeding infants exclusively until 6 months of age, and continuing breastfeeding after starting complementary foods, up to 2 years of age and beyond, is recommended.
- 2 Introduce common food allergens to your baby at around 6 months of age to help prevent food allergy.
- 3 Offer one new common food allergen at a time. For example, don't offer peanuts and fish at the same time.
- 4 If your baby doesn't show signs of food allergy, keep offering that food 2 to 3 times a week.

### Possible signs of food allergy

- rash, hives (raised red, itchy bumps on the skin)
- watery eyes
- vomiting, diarrhea
- runny nose
- irritability, inconsolable crying
- swelling of face or tongue
- difficulty breathing

### If your baby shows signs of food allergy:

Stop offering that food and talk to your health care provider. If your baby is having difficulty breathing, call 9-1-1.




### Some babies are at higher risk of food allergy.

My baby has:	Yes	No
A food allergy I already know about		
Eczema		
A parent with a food allergy, eczema, asthma, or seasonal allergies		
A sibling with a food allergy, eczema, asthma, or seasonal allergies		

If you answered **yes** to any of the above, your baby may be at higher risk of food allergy. Talk with your health care provider about introducing common food allergens. Even if your baby is at high risk of food allergy, you should introduce common food allergens at around 6 months of age.

\*Cow's milk should not be introduced to infants before 9-12 months of age, and soy milk should not be given to infants under 2 years of age.

## Here are some ideas for how to offer common food allergens to your baby.

 <p>Eggs</p>	Small pieces of hard-cooked or scrambled egg	 <p>Shellfish</p>	Small pieces of cooked shellfish, such as mussels, clams, shrimp, lobster, oysters, and scallops
 <p>Milk</p>	Yogurt or grated cheese	 <p>Soy</p>	Small pieces of soft or medium firm tofu
 <p>Wheat</p>	Iron-fortified wheat cereal	 <p>Peanuts</p>	Smooth peanut butter, thinned out with water and offered on a spoon
 <p>Sesame</p>	Tahini (sesame paste), thinned out with water and offered on a spoon Hummus made with tahini, offered on a spoon Sesame oil mixed into ground or finely minced meat	 <p>Tree nuts</p>	Smooth tree nut butter, such as cashew butter, thinned out with water and offered on a spoon
 <p>Fish</p>	Small pieces of cooked, boneless fish	 <p>Mustard</p>	Mustard mixed into ground or finely minced meat, poultry, or wild game

### Tips for offering common food allergens



While introducing common food allergens, continue to offer other foods to your baby. You do not need to follow the common food allergen guidelines for other foods you offer.



Choose a time when your baby will be awake for at least 2 hours in case they have an allergic reaction.



Feed common food allergens on a spoon, rather than having your baby feed themselves. Food smeared on your baby's skin may cause skin irritation that can be mistaken for allergy.

### Questions?

To discuss any questions or concerns with a Public Health Nurse or Nutritionist, call our Health Unit at 1-800-660-5853.

To speak with a registered dietitian, contact Health Connect Ontario (811)

