

Department of Nutrition & Dietetics

High Energy Weaning Guide



Patient Name:.....

Dietitian:.....

Date:.....

**For further information & advice please contact
the Paediatric Dietitians Tel: 0300 422 5646**

Introduction to Weaning:

What is Weaning?

Weaning is the introduction of solid foods in to your baby's diet. Often, babies are ready to wean between 4 and 6 months but it is recommended to wait until 6 months (this advice is different in premature babies so please speak with your dietitian about this).

How do I know my baby is ready to be weaned?

- Able to hold head up without support
- Being hungry after milk and in between feeds
- Showing an interest in other people's food
- Chewing on their fists
- Not settling at night time when they were previously

What is High Energy Weaning?

Introducing foods that have more energy in them to help support your baby's growth and encourage weight gain.

How to Wean Safely:

- Ensure meat, eggs and fish are all thoroughly cooked
- Do not add salt to foods and avoid salty foods
- Avoid oily fish more than once per week
- Avoid honey under one year of age
- Avoid cow's milk as a drink until one year of age (can be used with food e.g. with cereal) but not as main milk source
- Some foods are known as 'Allergy Foods' – introduce one of these at a time and consult your GP if your child has a reaction to any of the foods below:
 - Eggs
 - Soya
 - Cow's milk
 - Wheat
 - Nuts
 - Fish
 - Shellfish
- Allow at least 3 days in between introduction of these foods

Stages of Weaning:

4-6 Months:

If your baby is showing signs that they are ready to be weaned introduce baby cereal/ rice with milk (breast or formula) for breakfast and a vegetable/fruit puree as main meal. Continue milk feeds as normal and offer small portions (2-3 teaspoons) of food in between.

6-7 Months:

At this stage it is useful to introduce cups and start to move away from bottles to help your baby get used to these.

Aim to offer three small meals per day (with lots of iron containing foods e.g. meat, fish, lentils) and introduce a sweet course with lunch and dinner as able e.g. milk pudding/ custard.

7-9 Months:

As your baby gets older you can now introduce lumpier purees in to their diet and offer lots of finger foods in between meals as snacks. You can also try introducing a savoury course before their main meals so they have a 3-course meal where possible!

9-12 Months:

By this time, your baby should be able to manage the same meals as you and your family and a good variety of different flavours and textures too.

Let your baby feed themselves and get messy! Messy play is good for their development and also helps them to progress well with their eating.





High Energy Weaning:

- When progressing with weaning, try offering your baby a small amount of milk before their meal and then offer the food as we want them to fill up on food rather than milk
- The main part of the meal should include a protein source (meat/fish/tofu/eggs/lentils), a carbohydrate (potato/ rice/ pasta) and vegetables. Extra energy can be added to all these parts using extra cheese/ butter/ full fat milk to help promote weight gain
- When giving vegetables, they tend to be quite low in energy so opt for starchier vegetables which have more energy in them including sweet potato, parsnips, cassava and avocado to help promote weight gain
- The sweet course following the main meal should contain a portion of fruit (fresh/tinned/stewed) along with a carbohydrate source such as rice pudding, custard, ice cream or yoghurt
- For any shop bought jars try to read the label to see what they offer your baby. A

key thing to look for is the amount of protein that the jar provides and you would want to ensure that they contain the following amounts as a minimum:

- **Meat Meals – 2.5g Protein/ 100g**
- **Vegetarian Meals – 2g Protein/ 100g**
- **Sweet Meals 1g Protein/ 100g**
- When buying shop brought jars try and look for the ones that provide more energy – look for words in savoury jars saying – ‘cheese/ creamed/ creamy’ and in sweet jars opt for ones saying ‘crumble/pie/oat’
- For high energy shop brought snacks try baby fruit/ oat bars, rice cakes/ breadsticks, fruit bites, baby biscuits and baby flavoured ‘puffs’

How to Make Foods More Nutritious:

Cheese, cream, full-fat milk, butter and oil can all be added to different foods to ensure they provide more energy. Simple ways of doing this in practice include:

- Tossing pasta in oil
- Melting butter over vegetables
- Spreading butter extra thick on toast and crumpets
- Adding cream/ milk to get the consistency your baby needs
- Add cream to puddings
- Fry mince in oil
- Add in butter when making meals

High Energy Meal Ideas:

High energy meal ideas (textured to suit baby's stage of weaning)

Scrambled egg made with butter and cream with cheese on top
Macaroni cheese made with a creamy cheese sauce
Fish pie made with a creamy cheese sauce
Cheesy, creamy vegetables
Jacket potato (without skin) with butter, cheese and beans
Spaghetti bolognese with cheese on top and pasta tossed in oil

High energy finger food/snack ideas

Cheese strips
Breadsticks/vegetable sticks dipped in guacamole/ cream cheese/
egg mayonnaise
Rice cakes with peanut butter
Banana slices with peanut butter on
Hard boiled egg cut up
Crumpet/toast cut up with butter
Meatballs

High energy puddings

Full fat yoghurt
Rice pudding with cream
Stewed fruit/ banana with full-fat milk custard
Milk jelly and custard

Resources:

Where to Look for Further Information –

British Nutrition Foundation

BLISS Charity – weaning for premature babies

British Dietetic Association

www.infantandtoddlerforum.org

www.foodincare.org.uk

Caroline Walker Trust – ‘Eating Well in 1st year of life’

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Produced – July 2017 (due for update July 2019)

