

Top 10 Tips for Food Preparation for Infants

1. For fruits and veggies, **be sure the foods are fresh, ripe and relatively free of blemishes.** Clean the product thoroughly to remove any pesticides and/or waxes. Many parents prefer to peel the food before trialing.
2. For meats, **be sure that cooking times and temperatures are appropriate for safety.** Be sure that all bones and gristle have been removed.
3. **Typical serving size for an infant is 1 Tbsp of each food per serving,** according to Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)
(<http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=8055#.UCqu51ZISSp>)
4. **Breastmilk and/or formula are the primary sources of infant nutrition before the age of one.** Remember--- before one, solids are just for fun! Plan serving size accordingly.
5. Some infants tolerate **different varieties of textures.** For a thinner, smoother puree, try adding liquid formula, breastmilk, or water to the puree. For a chunkier serving, try mashing the food with a fork rather than pureeing in the blender.
6. **Make it fun!** Sing, play and laugh while eating. This is the time to model meals as being social as well as nutritional experiences
7. **If your child becomes frustrated, stop, take a break, and try again later.** The minute meals become about stress and are not fun, relaxing and/or positively stimulating, take a breather.
8. If your child refuses a new food, **try it a different way.** Instead of mashing a raw banana, try cooking it and then pureeing. If your child refuses warm peach puree, try freezing it and feeding in a mesh food feeder.
9. If your child has a few safe foods, **try mixing foods in combos to increase variety.** Instead of simply pureed peaches or bananas, try banana-peach puree, or banana puree with tiny peach chunks (when appropriate for age).
10. **If you have concerns that your child is experiencing food aversions or has a medical issue that is interfering with his/her ability to eat** in an age-appropriate way, it is very important to inform all of his/her doctors (Allergist, Pediatrician, Gastroenterologist) in case evaluation is warranted.