

## How to Start Your Own Food Journal

Whether you are nursing or starting solids with your child, a food journal can be a helpful tool in figuring out which foods are safe and which foods are unsafe for your little one. Many parents find it helpful in learning what their little one's "baseline" or "norm" looks like, so that they are better able to identify reaction symptoms if and when they do occur. We provided you with some helpful sample journals but in case you would like to create your own, here are some tips to get you started. Remember-- whether it is written in a spiral notebook or with a computer program, the key is making it work for YOU so that it can be best optimized as another tool for the toolbox.

- Create a format that is easy to use, easy to read, and that makes sense to YOU
- Keep your food journal in a place accessible to everyone who will be using it (parents, grandparents, other caregivers, etc.)
- Demonstrate to other caregivers how to use the food journal and how it can help your child
- Most parents find it helpful to keep track of the following:
  - Dates
  - Types of foods and amounts of foods eaten during the day
  - Times for each meal/snack/nursing/bottle feeding
  - Notes about your child's response to the food (positive or negative)
  - Times that you see potential symptoms
  - What food is being trialled and what day of the trial you are on
  - Any other topics that are relevant to your little one that might be affected by a food trial
- Let your child's doctor(s) know that you are keeping a food journal-- some doctors find it helpful to view the food journal periodically to track symptoms, to check on the child's diet, or for other reasons.