

Food Allergy Considerations for Infants and Toddlers

What are the Most Common Food Allergies?

Dairy products (such as yogurt, cow's milk, or infant formula made with cow's milk protein), eggs, soy, wheat, peanut butter, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish cause the majority of allergic reactions.



How to Introduce Common Allergy-Related Foods

- If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, there is no need to avoid these foods, and it does not help lower the risk of food allergies in children.
- You can introduce these foods to your baby when they are ready to eat solids (usually between 4 and 6 months of age).
- Introduce these foods to your baby after other solids have been fed and tolerated, and give the first taste at home in case a reaction happens. If no reaction occurs, gradually increase the amount of that food and add another new food after three to five days.

Signs of a Food Allergy

- Skin rashes, trouble breathing, nausea, vomiting, or loose stools in response to feeding. Seek medical care and advice right away if you see any of these signs.
- Acidic foods such as berries, tomatoes, citrus fruits, and vegetables may cause a rash around the mouth or buttocks, but this is irritation from the acid in the food, not from an allergic reaction to the food. You can still give your baby appropriate amounts of these foods unless the rash seems to bother them.

Talk to your child's doctor!

- If either biological parent has food allergies, talk to your child's doctor about any special steps you need to take when introducing common food allergy items (such as products with peanuts, eggs, dairy, or wheat) to your baby.
- Ask your child's doctor if you are considering using hydrolyzed or "hypoallergenic" infant formulas—there is no evidence that these help prevent food allergies in infants.
- Your doctor may recommend a full series of tests and a personalized plan to introduce solid food to your baby.