

# Baby's First Foods-Vegan Eating

## At around six months, babies need solid food

Breastfeeding (or infant formula) is an important source of nutrition for babies in their first year. For babies who are started on a vegan diet, breastfeeding for the first two years or more (if possible) is recommended. For babies being fed a vegan diet who are not being breastfed, or only having some breastfeeds, a soy-based infant formula is recommended as a milk substitute for their first two years. At around 6 months start to offer puree foods. Gradually vary the texture to minced and mash, then finger foods. Offer your baby a variety of foods. Below are very important foods to offer your baby as part of meals and snacks. There is not enough evidence to say if a vegan diet is safe or unsafe for babies and children. What we do know is that the nutrition needs are very high during these times. To meet those needs you will need to carefully plan your child's diet and take certain nutrition supplements.

### Plant based protein foods



#### Grain (cereal) foods

Barley, wheat, oats, quinoa, rice  
Choose white varieties to reduce fibre.



#### Tofu/Tempeh

Pureed into vegetables or cut up as finger foods  
Offer every day.



#### Nuts and seeds

Walnut, peanut, almond, sesame  
Ground up and added to vegetable purees and mashes, cereals or as a paste on bread.



#### Lentils and legumes

All types cooked until soft  
Cook into stews, curries and soups. Make into patties or balls for finger foods.



#### Plant-based milks

Choose full fat types with added vitamin B12  
These may be use in cooking or on cereal.

## Healthy fats



### Flaxseed

Add flaxseed oil to food

From about 10 months, add 5-10ml flaxseed oil each day to foods like cooked vegetables, cereals and puddings.



### Chia seeds

Use in pudding and cereals

Make a fruit or milk pudding. Add chia seeds to plant-based milk, stir and soak for at least 20 mins, or chill overnight.



### Walnuts

Grind up (whole are choking risk)

Add to foods like cereals or vegetables. Use as a spread by blending with oil.



### Canola

A source of Omega-3 fats

Use to cook with or as a dressing on vegetables.



### Avocado and olive oil

Source of monounsaturated fat

Mashed avocado alone or on toast. Cook with olive oil or drizzle on foods like vegetables.

## Important nutrients



### Iron and vitamin C

Serve food sources together

Fruit and cereal (with added iron), plant-based patties and vegetables or fruit.



### Calcium

Plant-based milk with added calcium (100mg/100ml), almonds (ground), sesame, tofu, broccoli, kale, leafy green vegetables

Offer food sources each day.



### Vitamin B12

A supplement is needed

Food sources - soy milk and other foods with added vitamin B12 and nutritional yeast.



### Vitamin D

Follow sunshine advice for babies

Food sources are margarines and mushrooms (exposed to the sun for 30-60 minutes).



### Zinc

Wholegrains (oats, quinoa, brown rice), legumes, soy products, potatoes, nut pastes

Offer a variety of plant foods.