Best for Baby: Gentle First Foods
Good eating habits start early

Welcome to Kabrita USA’s Best-for-Baby food guide. Here, we are going to walk you through how to choose the best baby foods for your little one, and share tips and tools to make the process as smooth and easy as possible.

During your baby’s first year, breast milk remains the single most important food in your baby’s diet, providing gentle protein, good fat and natural carbohydrates. In the absence of breast milk, a naturally easy-to-digest formula can be the staple of your little one’s diet. Gentle first foods will offer complementary nutrition and are important for experimentation, play and fun.

Introducing solid food is a fun and exciting time for families, but it may also come with questions and uncertainty. From health professionals to grandparents and friends, lots of people will have opinions about what is best for your baby.

When it comes time to introduce solid foods, the thing to remember is one size does not fit all. First foods will vary, depending on culture, personal preference and what’s available. Best-for-baby: Gentle First Foods reviews four key principles related to food introduction. These principles act as guidelines that can be used by all families, no matter what their food preferences are, as they embark on their food introduction journey.

Wishing you and your family nutritious and delicious food!

The Kabrita USA Team
Is my little one ready for solid foods?

It’s important to remember that the age a child is ready for solid food depends on a variety of developmental factors.

Luckily, our children can give us lots of clues! Some common signs of solid food introduction readiness may include:1

- A doubling of birth weight (or reaching at least 13 lbs.)
- Good head control
- Opening the mouth when food is offered
- An interest in food and in being fed
- The ability to move food from a spoon to the back of the mouth

Around six months, most children will be ready for solid food.
Quality

When we designed our line of high quality goat milk foods, we intentionally crafted products with no added GMO ingredients. Some genetically modified (GM) foods have been found to contain higher pesticide residues.²

This factor, non-GMO, contributes to Quality. Choosing foods with no added GMO ingredients (where possible) is critical when it comes to selecting Best-for-Baby First Foods.

Young children are among the most vulnerable to environmental toxins. Chronic exposure, to even small amounts, can have a big impact on their growth, and physical and cognitive development.²

In 2012, the American Academy of Pediatrics released a report on pesticide exposure in children. In it, they concluded that North American children are increasingly exposed to pesticides through air, dust, soil, and food.⁴

Since genetically modified crops were introduced in the US, overall pesticide use has increased by an estimate 183 million kg (404 million pounds), compared with the amount that would have been used if the same acres had been planted with non-GM crops.⁵

The five most prevalent GMO crops

- corn
- sugar beets
- cotton
- canola
- soy
Reducing pesticides in the diet

The American Academy of Pediatrics has advocated reducing children’s exposure to potentially harmful pesticides.

Choosing organic foods and/or with no GMO ingredients added is one strategy to help achieve this. In one study, researchers followed 23 children, ages 3-11, for 15 consecutive days as they ate either conventional or organic food.

Looking at pesticide metabolites found in the urine, the researchers could conclude that an organic diet provided a dramatic and immediate protective effect against exposures to pesticides, and that these children were most likely exposed to these pesticides exclusively through their diet.

For families interested in minimizing their pesticide exposure through diet, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) has compiled a helpful shopping guide.

The Clean Fifteen™ fruits and vegetables (few, if any pesticide residues detected)

- sweet corn
- avocado
- pineapple
- cabbage
- onions
- eggplant
- papayas
- honeydew melon
- asparagus
- mushrooms
- kiwis
- frozen sweet peas
- cauliflower
- cantaloupe
- broccoli

The Dirty Dozen™ fruits and vegetables (the most pesticide residues)

- strawberries
- spinach
- nectarines
- apples
- peaches
- celery
- grapes
- pears
- cherries
- tomatoes
- kale
- potatoes

*Information based on EWG’s 2019 results and guide
Digging deeper into glyphosate

Since the 1990’s, we have seen a dramatic increase in the use of the herbicide glyphosate due to the development of glyphosate-resistant genetically modified crops. In the United States, glyphosate use has increased by a factor of more than 250 — from 0.4 million kg in 1974 to 113 million kg in 2014.\(^2\)

Glyphosate is a powerful herbicide that destroys weeds. It does so by blocking a biochemical pathway critical for growth. While humans lack this particular pathway, research suggests that glyphosate may interfere with other important processes.

Human gut bacteria, (essential for immune health) does possess the same critical biochemical pathway as weeds. As such, glyphosate may adversely impact the gut microbiome.

To avoid glyphosate, choose certified organic or certified glyphosate-free foods, such as Kabrita’s Goat Milk Formula, Organic Porridges and Goat Cheese Snack Puffs.
Whole foods

A whole food is one that has been processed or refined as little as possible, and is free from additives or other artificial substances.

Processing or refining of foods may be done to make a food taste better, to create a finer texture, or to improve shelf life. While these processes may offer some benefits, they may also result in the removal of important nutrients, such as vitamins, minerals and fiber. Often, it may also involve the addition of sugar.

Best-for-Baby: Gentle First Foods recognizes the value of cultivating a diet based on unprocessed, whole foods.

Current Recommendations for Feeding Baby

For many decades, white rice cereal was the predominant first food recommended by the medical community. In addition to promoting a diet lacking important fiber, this practice may also be linked to the development of obesity and type-2 diabetes.⁷

Many health professionals now recommend starting with real, whole foods, and ditching processed foods, like white rice cereal. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends offering age-appropriate portions and choosing foods for your child from the following food groups: vegetables and fruits, whole grains, dairy, and quality protein sources.⁸

Blend, chop or puree some of these favorite whole foods.

Dairy
- butter
- cow’s milk yogurt
- goat’s milk yogurt
- cow’s milk cheese
- goat’s milk cheese

Fruits & Vegetables
- bananas
- avocado
- sweet potato
- pears
- peas
- apples
- carrots
- parsnips

Protein
- eggs
- beef
- chicken
- fish
- nuts
- seeds

Grain
- brown rice
- whole oats
- buckwheat
- whole barley
- whole wheat

To learn more about ways to introduce common foods allergens, please read on to our section ‘Easy to digest’. 
Choosing whole foods has the ‘best for baby’ benefit of being low in sugar.

Added dietary sugars have been linked with an increase in childhood obesity, as well as dental caries. The World Health Organization recommends that adults and children keep their intake of free sugars (those added to food and drink, or naturally-occurring sugars in refined foods such as honey, syrup or fruit juice) to less than 10% of their total energy intake. This means no more than 25 grams daily for children between 1-3 years old.

Eating the ‘Standard American Diet’, the ‘sugar budget’ can quickly be spent by breakfast alone: ½ cup of orange juice may contain 10 g of sugars and 1 packet of maple brown sugar instant oatmeal may contain up 12 g! The best strategy is to learn to read food labels thoroughly and know all the names sugar may go by!

Some sneaky names of sugar may include: corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, high fructose corn syrup, invert sugar, maltodextrin, maltose, rice syrup and sucrose.

Whole foods, such as fruits and vegetables, are also a natural source of fiber. Fiber may help to balance blood sugar levels, benefit the gut microbiome (the community of beneficial bacteria and fungi in the gut), and help with digestion and regular bowel movements. While there is no set amount of daily fiber for infants, toddlers should aim for 19 mg each day.

Whole Food Wins. Low in Added Sugars. Fiber-rich.
Nutrient dense

Nutrient spotlight: 3 critical nutrients to keep an eye on

Throughout solid food introduction and early childhood, it’s important to provide foods that are nutrient dense. Best-for-Baby: Gentle First Foods encourages nutrient dense foods that will deliver the critical vitamins, minerals, fats and protein little ones need for their rapid growth and development.

1. iron
2. vitamin D
3. omega 3

Iron deficiency is one of the most common nutrient deficiencies in children, and may affect up to 15% of toddlers. Iron is vital for red blood cells and essential for delivering oxygen from the lungs to muscle and tissue in the rest of the body for energy. Inadequate iron intake may lead to a more serious condition called iron deficiency anemia, with associated symptoms such as paleness, lethargy and shortness of breath.

Children under 12 months should aim for 11 mg of iron daily, while those one to four years should have 7 mg of iron each day. Along with a healthy diet that includes iron-rich foods, such as leafy greens, meat, nuts and beans, Kabrita Goat Milk Toddler Formula can help children achieve adequate amounts of daily iron.
Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that is made by the body when sunlight hits skin. It is essential for healthy bones and increases absorption of calcium. Severe deficiency may lead to rickets, causing very weak bones and increasing risk of fracture. Vitamin D has many other functions, including neuromuscular development and immune function.

Vitamin D deficiency in the US is common, and as many as 60% of children may have insufficient levels. Low levels of vitamin D may be more common than you may think, since clothing and sunscreen also block the synthesis of vitamin D, and very few foods contain vitamin D.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that infants receive 400 IU daily, and increased the recommended amount of vitamin D for toddlers to 600 IU per day. Food sources for vitamin D include salmon and fortified orange juice. Kabrita Goat Milk Toddler Formula can help children achieve the recommended amount of vitamin D for toddlers to 600 IU per day.

Omega 3 fatty acids are essential and must be obtained through the diet, as the body cannot make them. DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) is a crucial omega-3 fatty acid that contributes to brain, eye and neurological development in children.

Since children’s brains grow rapidly during the infant and toddler stages, DHA is especially important to support development in the first two years of life. There are a number of studies that highlight the importance of DHA in infants and children. These include positive effects on the developing visual system, as well as cognitive development. Omega 3 fatty acids, including DHA, also may positively influence other body systems, including the skin. Omega 3 fatty acids have an anti-inflammatory effect and may help reduce eczema symptoms.

The National Institute of Health recommends that infants take in 500 mg of omega 3 fatty acids daily, and toddlers 1-3 years should aim for 700 mg daily. Kabrita Goat Milk Toddler Formula can help children achieve adequate amounts of daily DHA.
Tips to ensure optimal nutrient intake

No parent wants to follow their little one around all day calculating fiber, sugar or specific nutrient intakes! In fact, when it comes to making food choices, the American Academy of Pediatrics specifically recommends that parents consider their child’s whole diet pattern. This means that the best strategy is to choose and consume nutritious foods from each of the main food groups.

Here are three helpful tips to keep in mind:

1. **Choose colorful fruits and vegetables that are naturally nutrient-dense.**

2. **Offer a variety of foods and do not give up! Repetition is key to success.**

3. **Continue breastfeeding or supplement with a high quality formula.**
Easy to digest foods are well tolerated by your little one and help them to thrive.

*Not suitable for children with cow milk protein allergy.
Introducing new foods

1. Introduce only one new food at a time, and wait three to five days before moving on to the next food.

2. Keep an eye out for possible food reactions and remember that some symptoms may take up to 72 hours to appear.

3. Once a food has been successfully introduced, it can stay in the food rotation while continuing with other new foods.

Watching for Reactions

You can use Kabrita’s “Food Introduction Symptom Log” to track your baby’s new food introduction and make note of possible food-related reactions.

A new onset symptom, or a worsening of a symptom your child already experiences, may be associated with a food trigger.

If your little one experiences a mild symptom, it’s best to remove the possible offending food until symptoms clear. Once symptoms have resolved, you may try the same food again. If the reaction recurs, contact your baby’s health professional, as symptoms may indicate a food allergy or sensitivity. If your baby has a severe reaction, it’s always best to contact your baby’s health professional.

Foods that do not provoke any reaction and are well tolerated by your little one may be deemed ‘easy to digest’ and can become a part of their regular diet.

Introducing Potentially Allergenic Foods

Some of the more common potentially allergenic foods include peanuts, cow milk, egg, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish. If your baby is between 4-6 months, and has tolerated a few low allergenic foods well (such as sweet potato, carrot and banana), you can move forward with introducing potentially allergenic foods. According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, it’s best not to wait to introduce these foods as delaying introduction may increase a baby’s risk of developing allergies. However, if your little one has an established food allergy or suspected food allergy, mild to moderate eczema despite treatment, or a sibling with peanut allergy, it’s best to consult with your baby’s health professional prior to introduction of potentially allergenic foods.
Track your baby's progress with first foods

Principles of food introduction:
1. Choose high quality foods
2. Choose whole foods
3. Provide nutrient-dense foods
4. Select easy-to-digest foods

Ensure all foods are soft, well cooked or pureed to prevent choking.

Symptoms* to watch for:
- Eczema
- Gas
- Dark circles under eyes
- Vomiting
- Hives
- Diaper rash
- Constipation
- Unusual fatigue
- Swelling
- Runny nose
- Diarrhea
- Fussiness
- Blood in stool

*Symptoms list is not exhaustive. If your little one has a severe reaction, please contact your health professional.

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### Food Introduction Symptom Log

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<th>Watch for Symptoms*</th>
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*Introduce one new food each 3-5 days, keeping an eye out for potential food-related reactions.
Good habits start early!

Food introduction is an exciting time for baby, and for the whole family!

*Best-for-Baby: Gentle First Foods* shares a framework for food introduction based on key principles, rather than prescribing specific foods in set amounts.

We hope that these principles will empower your family with the knowledge to make the best food choices for your little one, based on their unique needs.

Remember - parents truly are the best role models for their children, and can help foster a respect and love for wholesome foods that will last a lifetime.

About Kabrita USA

Kabrita USA delivers nourishment and comfort to children and their parents through our naturally easy to digest Goat Milk Foods. We empower families with a new choice in formula feeding - one that marries the ideal of all-natural with the rigor and safety of science.

Kabrita USA is 100% women run and led by Moms. Our mission is to empower parents to nourish their child with confidence. We strive to add value to our community of Moms through our commitment to education, transparency and supportive communication.

*Health Disclaimer*

Best-for-baby: Gentle First Foods is for information purposes only. It is not meant to treat, cure, or diagnose any health issues. Before beginning any diet plan it is recommended that you speak with a personal health care professional.
References
