

August / September newsletter



Nourishing the Next Generation

Practical advice for caring for your young ones with food, fun and love

For more support, contact your local extension office.

The Food Assistance Program can help people of all ages with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-888-369-4777.

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Is It Done Yet? Cook Food Safely!

Challenge yourself and your grandchild to never taste meats, poultry, seafood, egg dishes, casseroles, microwave meals, leftovers, or foods with raw eggs, such as cookie dough and cake batter, until they are cooked safely. When you think that the food you are cooking is done, use a food thermometer to measure its internal temperature in several places. If it has not reached a high enough temperature, cook it longer. There's no other way to be sure that a food is safely cooked.

You can show your grandchild how to use a food thermometer and review safe cooking temperatures in less than two minutes! How? Watch the online video at www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/cook Why? Cooked foods must reach a high enough internal temperature because heat kills the harmful germs that may be present that can cause a foodborne illness. Every year, one in six people living in the U.S. get sick from food poisoning. Young children are even more susceptible, because their immune systems aren't developed enough to fight foodborne infections.





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Is Your Grandbaby Ready for More than Formula?

Introducing solid baby foods when a baby is too young has been linked to the child later becoming overweight. If you can answer yes to each of the following questions, then you can dress your little one in a bib and get ready for a new stage in life – a lifelong adventure in healthful eating! Is your grandbaby at least six months old? Can he sit up with hardly any assistance with good head control, and hold his head up high? Does she show interest in food — reaching for it and opening her mouth in anticipation?



Starting an infant on solid baby foods should be a gradual process. At first, start the meal with some breast milk or infant formula. Then switch to one or two very small half-spoonsful of baby food. Finish with more milk or formula. If your grandbaby doesn't have the ability to move food to the back of his mouth to swallow it, or if he cries or turns away when you spoon-feed him, wait a week before trying again. Once she learns how to swallow baby food, increase the amount gradually. Give your baby one new food at a time, and wait at least three days before starting another. Remember that even after you have introduced solid baby foods, breast milk or infant formula should be a main source of nutrition for your grandchild throughout his or her first 12 months.

Source: The American Academy of Pediatrics, <https://healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Switching-To-Solid-Foods.aspx>

Teaching Babies and Toddlers to Feed Themselves

Helping your young grandchild learn how to feed himself means that you are also helping him develop lifelong coordination — matching the small muscle movements of his hands and fingers with his eyes.

To encourage his or her developing abilities and to help make eating get easier for your little one, the whole family should eat together whenever possible. Other ways are:

- * Serving some foods at meals and snacks that your young one can eat with her fingers, and resisting the urge to spoon-feed her all of her foods. To avoid choking, serve only finger foods that you have cut into small pieces and that are soft and easy to swallow.
- * Putting a box or another object under your grandchild's feet while he eats, in order to allow them to rest on something and not just dangle.
- * Serving your toddler foods that she can dip into a sauce, such as yogurt.
- * Using child-friendly eating utensils easy for his little hands to hold: A small cup with a lid, broad base and large handles, filled just half full or less; A child-sized spoon and fork as soon as he shows an interest; A plate with a rim that will allow your grandchild to more easily push his food onto a fork and spoon.

Source: AAP, www.healthychildren.org