

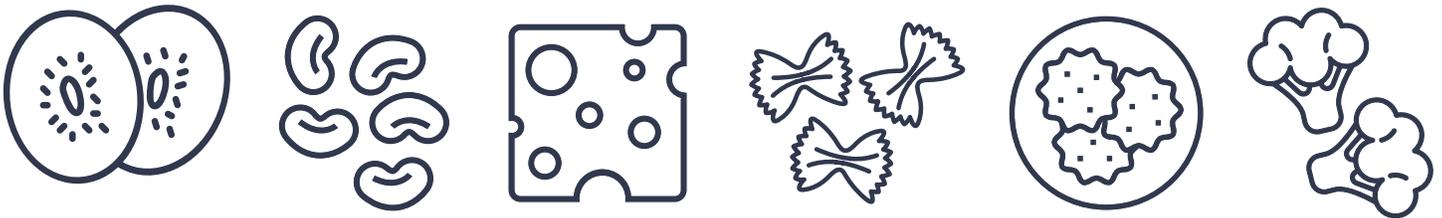


Past the Puffs & Pouches: 100 Healthy Snacks for Babies and Toddlers

Between 12 and 15 months of age, a child is ready to eat two snacks per day in addition to three meals. That's a lot of food to plan and prepare!

This guide is intended to help brainstorm easy nutritious snacks and help you break free from puffs and pouches, which do little to advance a child's development as an eater. Pouches, for example, further a sucking motion rather than chewing, and offer similar variations of sweet texture-less purees; puffs lack the diversity of flavors, colors, and mouthfeels that whole foods offer and can prime your child's palate for processed foods.

Furthermore, a 2019 study demonstrated that 95% of baby food in the United States—including all major organic brands—contained traces of toxic metals like arsenic and lead.¹ One of the biggest offenders? Puffs. Many commercial baby food companies use rice, sweet potatoes, and carrots as base ingredients in their products; these plants—even when organically grown—tend to take up metals present in our soil and water more easily than others.



Best Time of Day to Serve Snacks

Offer snacks at the midpoint between meals so your baby has time to digest. For example, if breakfast is at 7:00 a.m. and lunch is at 11:30 a.m., serve a snack between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Limit snack time to 15 minutes and make sure all snacks end at least 90 minutes before the next meal.

Babies thrive on routine, and it's important to keep meal and snack times consistent. When you are out and about, offer snacks at the same time you would at home. Importantly, refrain from using snack food as a reward or incentive in challenging situations.

¹Houlihan, J., Healthy Babies Bright Futures, & Brody, C. (2019). What's in my baby's food? https://www.healthybabyfood.org/sites/healthybabyfoods.org/files/2019-10/Baby-FoodReport_FULLREPORT_ENGLISH_R5b.pdf

Milk, Juice, Smoothies, and Water



Milk

Breast milk or formula should be the primary drink for babies under 12 months of age. Most pediatric organizations recommend waiting until a baby's first birthday to introduce cow's milk (or any other ruminant milk) as a baby's digestive system may not well tolerate cow's milk protein in large quantities.² Compared to breast milk or formula, cow's milk is nutritionally incomplete, which means it doesn't provide all of the healthy fats and nutrients baby needs to thrive.^{3,4} While cow's milk forms the base for most infant formulas, it's modified in formula to make it nutritionally similar to human milk.⁵

Around 11 months of age, it is our opinion that it's okay to offer small sips of cow's milk (~1 ounce) in an open cup to encourage baby's drinking skills and acclimate a child to the new taste. Avoid replacing breast milk or formula feeds with cow's milk. Babies who consume cow's milk prior to their first birthday are more at risk of iron deficiency anemia and intestinal distress, which can also contribute to anemia.⁶ Why? Cow's milk is low in iron and babies who drink cow's milk may reduce their intake of other iron-rich foods.⁷



Juice

Juice and soda are packed with sugar, which is not good for baby's health. Wait until at least the second birthday (and ideally even later) to occasionally serve juice and soda and not as an everyday beverage.



Smoothies

Smoothies are best introduced after 15-18 months of age so that baby has ample opportunity to learn to eat (rather than to continue to obtain nutrients via liquids). Nonetheless, an occasional sip of your green smoothie certainly won't hurt.



Water

Water may be introduced after 6 months of age. Per the American Academy of Pediatrics, starting around 6 months of age—and as long as baby is growing and gaining appropriately—small amounts of water can be offered, although not usually required. Just remember, water consumption can displace the intake of breast milk or formula and put babies at risk of inadequate intake of calories, protein, and essential nutrients.⁸

While the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests you can offer up to 8 ounces of water per day starting at 6 months old, it's our strong opinion that water should be limited to less than 2 to 4 ounces a day so it doesn't displace valuable nutrition from breast milk or formula. If you're concerned about your baby's hydration status, you can monitor the number of wet diapers and energy levels and contact your pediatrician.

² Martin, C., Ling, P.-R., & Blackburn, G. (2016b). Review of Infant Feeding: Key Features of Breast Milk and Infant Formula. *Nutrients*, 8(5), 279. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu8050279>

³ Leung, A. K. C., & Sauve, R. S. (2003b). Whole cow's milk in infancy. *Paediatrics & Child Health*, 8(7), 419–421. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pch/8.7.419>

⁴ Martin, C., Ling, P.-R., & Blackburn, G. (2016b). Review of Infant Feeding: Key Features of Breast Milk and Infant Formula. *Nutrients*, 8(5), 279. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu8050279>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Leung, A. K. C., & Sauve, R. S. (2003b). Whole cow's milk in infancy. *Paediatrics & Child Health*, 8(7), 419–421. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pch/8.7.419>

⁸ Lott, M., Callahan, E., Welker Duffy, E., Story, M., & Daniels, S. (2019). Healthy Beverage Consumption in Early Childhood. *Healthy Eating Research*. <https://healthydrinkshealthykids.org/app/uploads/2019/09/HER-HealthyBeverage-ConsensusStatement.pdf>

Snacking On-the-Go: Choking

We know that a highchair is the safest place to feed a baby. But let's be real: that's not always possible. Snacks often happen on-the-go, which increases the risk of choking. To minimize the risk while eating outside of the home, make sure the child is sitting in a completely upright position, within an arm's reach of their caregiver, and 100% supervised while eating. You can reduce the risk further by quartering round foods and grating or thinly slicing hard-to-chew foods. Never serve food to a baby in a car seat and never let a child run around while eating food.

Foods to avoid on-the-go due to high choking risk:



A Word on Dried Fruit

Raisins, fruit bars, and dried fruit (including freeze-dried fruit) are choking hazards for babies and toddlers. They're also a form of condensed sugar—albeit natural sugar, but still sugar, nonetheless. If you must serve dried fruit, wait until age 2 and take care to cut it into thin slivers to reduce the choking risk. When you do offer dried fruit, serve it alongside a food that is high in protein and fat, which will help offset the spike in blood sugar. Also, serve water to help rinse sugar residues out of the mouth and to replace the water lost in the fruit dehydration process.

100 Healthy Snacks

for Babies and Toddlers



Snack portions depend on the child's age and nutritional needs. We have provided for a main snack below with an optional allergen add-on for those families looking to expand their allergen exposure. We've also provided an optional protein add-on. Enjoy!

See the free **First Foods® database at solidstarts.com/foods** to learn how to safely cut and prepare each food for appropriate ages and development.

When You Have No Time and Can't Get Messy

Main	Allergy Add-on	Allergen-Free Protein
Apple, sliced	Peanut Flour	Turkey, shredded
Apple, sliced	Mozzarella, sliced	Black Beans
Banana, spears	Sesame, finely ground	Chickpeas, smashed
Banana, spears	Drinkable yogurt, plain & full-fat	Pumpkin Seeds, finely ground
Banana Smoothie	Peanut Flour	Pea Milk, plain
Bell Pepper, sliced	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Cannellini Beans
Blueberries, flattened	Kefir, plain	Kidney Beans
Broccoli Florets, steamed	Butter	Navy Beans
Cantaloupe	Mozzarella, sliced	Turkey, shredded
Cantaloupe	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Black Beans
Cauliflower, steamed	Peanut Flour	Chickpeas, smashed
Cherry Tomato, quartered	Swiss Cheese, sliced	Black Beans
Cucumber, thinly sliced	Peanut Flour	Pork, leftovers
Ezekiel Bread	Butter	Peas, defrosted
Grapefruit, quartered	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Turkey, shredded
Grapes, quartered	Swiss Cheese, sliced	Chicken, shredded
Honeydew Melon	Omelet, squares	Pinto Beans
Kiwi, sliced	Cottage Cheese, low sodium	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Kiwi, sliced	Swiss Cheese, sliced	Kidney Beans
Melon	Omelet, squares	Turkey, shredded
Papaya	Peanut Flour	Black Beans
Pineapple, sliced	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Turkey, shredded
Pineapple, sliced	Kefir, plain	Pork, leftovers
Peas, defrosted	Ghee (for pasta)	Lentil Pasta
Pear, ripe or poached	Unsweetened O's (containing wheat)	Peas, defrosted
Plum	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Cannellini Beans
Plum	Mozzarella, sliced	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Radishes, thinly sliced	Butter	Kidney Beans
Olives, rinsed & cut into rings	Mozzarella, sliced	Black Beans
Orange, sliced & membrane removed	Farmer Cheese	Pinto Beans
Strawberry	Tofu, cubed	Peas, defrosted
Soba Noodles	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Chickpeas, smashed
Star Fruit, sliced	Drinkable Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Lentil Pasta
Strawberry	Tempeh, soft, small cubes	Black Beans
Strawberry	Monterey Jack Cheese, sliced	Pinto Beans
Watermelon	Mozzarella, sliced	Turkey, shredded
Zucchini, raw & thinly sliced	Eggs, scrambled	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Zucchini, raw & thinly sliced	Butter	Chickpea Pasta

When You Have Some Time and Can Get Messy

Main	Allergy Add-on	Allergen-Free Protein
Apple, thinly sliced	Peanut Butter, smooth & thinned	Peas, defrosted
Apple, thinly sliced	Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Pumpkin Seed Butter
Applesauce	Nut Butter, thinned	Chicken, shredded
Asparagus, tips	Tahini, thinned	Cannellini Beans
Asparagus, tips	Parmesan Cheese, grated	Turkey, shredded
Avocado, spears	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Avocado, mashed	Tortilla, wheat	Black Beans
Avocado, mashed	Toast, wheat	Pinto Beans
Banana, spears	Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Pumpkin Seed Butter
Banana	Mascarpone Cheese	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Beet, steamed	Greek Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Sunflower Seed Butter
Bell Pepper, sliced	Tahini, thinned	Chickpeas, toasted & smashed
Bell Pepper, sliced & cooked	Nut Butter, thinned	Black Beans
Berry Fruit Salad	Ricotta Cheese	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Blackberries, defrosted	Nut Butter, thinned (for chicken)	Chicken, shredded
Blackberries, quartered	Kefir, plain	Peas, defrosted
Blueberries, defrosted	Cottage Cheese, low-sodium	Pumpkin Seeds, finely ground
Blueberries, flattened	Ricotta	Sunflower Seed Butter
Broccoli Florets, steamed	Peanut Butter, smooth & thinned	Kidney Beans
Butternut Squash, steamed strips	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Pumpkin Seed Butter, thinned
Butternut Squash, baked wedges	Tahini, thinned	Chickpeas, smashed
Cantaloupe, sliced	Ricotta Cheese	Peas, defrosted
Carrots, grated	Sour Cream	Black Beans
Carrots, steamed	Greek Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Corn on the Cob	Sour Cream	Black Beans
Cherries, quartered & smashed	Soy Yogurt, unsweetened	Sunflower Seed Butter
Cherry Tomato, quartered	Mozzarella, sliced	Pinto Beans
Cucumber, matchstick	Tahini	Cannellini Beans, pureed
Cucumber, matchstick	Greek Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Cucumber, thinly sliced	Toast, wheat	Chicken Liver Pâté
Honeydew Melon	Soy Yogurt, unsweetened	Seed Butter, no sesame
Green Beans, steamed	Tahini, thinned	Chickpeas, smashed
Kiwi, sliced	Tortilla, wheat	Black Bean, spread
Mango, spears or pit	Kefir, plain	Lentils, boiled leftovers
Nectarine	Ricotta Cheese	Pepitas, finely ground
Papaya	Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Chia Seed Pudding
Pasta	Tofu, cubed	Sunflower Seed Butter, thinned
Pasta	Sour Cream	Chickpeas, smashed
Pasta	Walnut Butter	Peas, defrosted
Peach, sliced	Ricotta Cheese	Sunflower Seeds, finely ground
Pear, very ripe or poached	Almond Butter, thinned	Chicken, shredded
Pear, very ripe or poached	Ricotta Cheese	Pepitas, finely ground
Plum	Toast, wheat	Pumpkin Seed Butter
Pomegranate Arils (age 12 months+)	Toast, wheat	Hummus, sesame-free
Potato, boiled	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Peas, defrosted
Pumpkin, pureed	Ricotta Cheese	Pumpkin Seed Butter
Raspberries	Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Chia Seed Pudding
Raspberries, defrosted	Cottage Cheese, low sodium	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Raspberries, quartered	Wheat Toast	Chicken Liver Pâté
Ricotta Cheese	Wheat Toast	Hemp Hearts, hulled
Seaweed, nori sheets (age 18 months+)	Tahini, thinned	Chickpeas, pureed (hummus)
Sugar Snap Peas	Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Lentils, boiled leftovers
Strawberry	Goat Cheese	Peas, defrosted
Sweet Potato, wedges	Tahini, thinned	Kidney Beans
Tahini Toast	Sesame Seeds	Pepitas, finely ground
Toast	Tahini, thinned	Chickpeas, smashed
Toast	Cashew Butter	Chicken, shredded
Tomato, beefsteak wedges	Hard-Boiled Egg, sliced	Turkey, shredded
Watermelon	Goat Cheese	Chicken, shredded
Yogurt, no added sugar	Pistachios, finely ground	Peas, defrosted
Yogurt, no added sugar	Toast, wheat	Pumpkin Seed Butter
Zucchini, raw & thinly sliced	Yogurt, plain & full-fat	Peas, defrosted



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