

FOODS

Peanut Butter for Babies: Early Introduction to Prevent Allergy

Current AAP guidance recommends introducing peanut butter early. Find out when and how to safely introduce peanut butter to your baby and how it may reduce allergy risk.

Key Takeaways

- Introduce peanut early - around 6 months when your baby is ready for solids - as thinned smooth peanut butter; early introduction may reduce peanut-allergy risk.
- Never offer whole or chopped peanuts or thick spoonfuls of peanut butter - they are serious choking hazards.
- Thin smooth peanut butter with water, breast milk, or formula, or stir into a familiar puree to a loose, easy-to-swallow texture.
- If your baby has moderate-to-severe eczema or an egg allergy, talk to your pediatrician first - testing or supervised introduction may be advised.
- Offer the first taste at home, earlier in the day, and watch for reaction signs such as hives, swelling, or trouble breathing.

Frequently Asked Questions

When should I introduce peanut to my baby?

For most babies, introducing peanut early, around 6 months when they are ready for solids, is now recommended and may help reduce the risk of developing a peanut allergy. Talk to your pediatrician first, especially if your baby has eczema or an egg allergy.

How do I serve peanut butter safely?

Use a smooth peanut butter thinned with warm water, breast milk, or formula until it is a loose, easy-to-swallow consistency, or stir a little into a familiar puree. Never offer thick spoonfuls of peanut butter, whole peanuts, or chopped peanuts.

Why can't babies have whole peanuts?

Whole and chopped peanuts are a serious choking hazard for babies and young children. Only smooth, thinned peanut butter or peanut puffs designed for babies are appropriate.

What are signs of a peanut allergy?

Watch for hives, swelling around the lips or eyes, vomiting, coughing, or any trouble breathing, usually within about two hours. Call emergency services for breathing difficulty. Discuss your baby's risk with your pediatrician before introducing.

My baby has eczema. Should I still introduce peanut?

Babies with moderate-to-severe eczema or an egg allergy are at higher risk for peanut allergy, and early introduction can still be beneficial, but you should talk to your pediatrician first, who may suggest testing or a supervised introduction.

How often should I offer peanut after the first taste?

Once your baby tolerates peanut, offering it regularly as part of a varied diet helps maintain tolerance. Your pediatrician can advise on frequency for your child.

Sources

1. When to Introduce Allergenic Foods to Your Baby — American Academy of Pediatrics
2. Guidelines for Early Food Introduction and Patterns of Food Allergy — American Academy of Pediatrics
3. Your baby's first solid foods — NHS