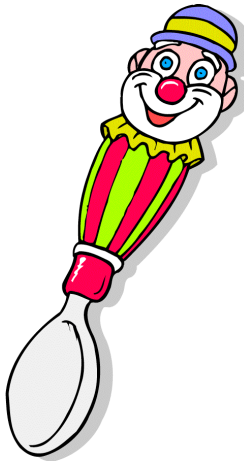




FIRST YEAR

Foods to Avoid



Question #1

Are there any foods I should absolutely avoid giving my baby during the first year of life?

Information

Yes. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (aap.org), whole cow's milk and honey should not be given to babies before 12 months of age. Cow's milk is not recommended because it does not contain adequate iron; honey from any source is not recommended due to the potential risk of exposure to a harmful bacterial toxin (botulism poisoning). In addition, hard and round foods that could cause a child to choke (e.g., nuts, grapes, raw carrots or candies) should also be avoided.

Doctors used to recommend waiting until the age of one or even much later to introduce solid foods that are common allergens, especially with children at risk for allergies. But the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has changed its message because studies show that these delays probably don't help keep allergies from developing. It's still a wise idea, though, to introduce new foods gradually, waiting several days after each new menu item to make sure your baby doesn't react negatively to it. And, if you believe that your baby is likely to have food allergies -- for example if allergies run in your family -- check with your medical provider to determine the best strategy for introducing allergenic foods like eggs, peanuts, wheat, soy, tree nuts (e.g., walnuts and pecans), fish and shellfish.

It's best to avoid giving your toddler foods that are fried and high in unhealthy fat -- French fries, for example. This type of food doesn't have any positive food value, creates a taste for unhealthy food, and includes a type of fat that isn't healthy for your growing toddler. In addition, avoid carbonated beverages and juice drinks that contain high-fructose corn syrup.