



Helping you to give your baby a healthy start

What is weaning?

An introduction to weaning

Weaning is essential for development

Weaning describes the process of moving your baby from a 100% milk diet to one that also includes solid food. Milk will continue to provide many of the nutrients your baby needs for some time, but as they become more active, both mentally and physically, solid foods will become an increasingly important part of their healthy, balanced diet. It's an exciting and essential part of your baby's development, and the different nutrients supplied from the food they eat will go a long way to support their healthy growth.

Lessons for life

By the time your baby is ready to start weaning, they will be at a stage when they are extremely adaptable and quick to learn. So introducing your baby to lots of new tastes will encourage them to enjoy a greater variety of foods later on, which will help you to give them a balanced diet.

The process of weaning is also about getting your baby used to the new and very different sensation of having food in their mouth. Over the next few months, the experience of eating from a spoon and exploring new textures will help develop your baby's swallowing and chewing skills. Gradually, they will be able to manage more complex flavours and lumpier textures, which will help them to develop the muscles they'll eventually use for talking.

Patience and perseverance

Weaning your baby takes time and patience. Learning to eat is very different from sucking milk from your breast or a bottle, so moving your baby from liquid to purées, then onto lumpier textures and finally small pieces, is a gradual and somewhat messy process!

The time it takes for babies to get used to the sensation of moving food around in their mouths varies from infant to infant. A lot of it is down to trial and error and perseverance. It's worth bearing in mind that it can take up to 15 attempts for your baby to accept certain foods. So don't worry if they don't seem to take to it straightaway.

If you'd like more tips, ideas on weaning, or have specific questions about your baby's progress, the Aptamil team includes baby feeding advisors, nutritionists, and of course mums, who can help you find the answers.

Call us on **08457 623 628**, between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday, or try our confidential instant messaging service, Live Chat available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.