

Timing of food introduction during weaning



The introduction of **complementary foods (CF)** is an important moment in the growth of a child.

WHEN TO START?



For nutritional reasons, the majority of infants need CF **from around 6 months of age**, before this age exclusive breastfeeding provides sufficient nutrients.



In some specific cases, **healthcare professionals** may recommend the introduction of CF **before 6 months**.

The specific age will depend on the pace of development of **each baby**.

SIGNS OF READINESS FOR CF:



Be able to sit up with good head control



Interest in mealtimes: chewing fists, putting objects to mouth...



No extrusion reflex or at least more limited

These signs usually appear at approximately **6 months of age**.



BENEFITS OF INTRODUCING CF AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME



Could help improve **infant health.**



Might play a role in **prevention of overweight and obesity.**



Will benefit your **baby's growth rate and nutritional status, avoiding deficiencies.**



Might help with eating disorders: **avoiding rejection of solid food or aversion to food.**



Premature introduction of CF is usually not beneficial for your baby and may even be harmful due to:



Posing a risk of **choking**



Increasing the risk of **infection**



Promoting rapid weight gain and **metabolic diseases**

WHAT ABOUT POTENTIALLY ALLERGENIC FOODS?



Allergenic foods such as **eggs, peanuts, fish, and cereals (gluten)**, can be introduced with other complementary foods. It is not advisable to delay their introduction with the purpose of preventing the development of allergic diseases.



As with all new food it is important that introduction of **possible allergens** is done one-at-a-time.



Consult your **pediatrician** if there is history of food allergies in the family.

