

## **INTRODUCTION OF SOLIDS TO ALLERGIC BABIES**

When foods are introduced too early into a digestive system that does not have the capacity to process the foods appropriately, problems can occur. One study showed that when children were introduced to four or more solid foods before the age of 4 months, they were nearly 300% more likely to develop recurrent eczema than those children not exposed to early solid feeding. Avoid being sensitised by the most common foods to form allergies by restricting these foods until the baby is older.

Introduce foods one at a time. This avoids confusion if there is an allergic reaction.

To introduce a food-Give 1 tsp on 1st day, 2 on 2nd day...Increase until there is a full serving ( up to 1/2 cup). If the baby rejects any food, do not persist but try again in another few weeks. Babies are aware of their own tolerance levels.

If symptoms appear, stop the food and wait 4 days before beginning another new food. Other foods that are tolerated can be eaten in the interim.

While introducing a food, watch for allergic symptoms-

**GIT-** vomiting, projectile vomiting, frequent loose stools +/- mucus diarrhoea or constipation, stomach pains, bloating, colic blood in stools poor appetite and weight gain

**RESP TRACT** - clear runny nose, nasal stuffiness, mucus, sneezing dry cough, nose rubbing, recurrent bronchitis, ear infections

**SKIN** - dry patches, cradle cap, itchy skin, eczema, hives, perioral rash or rash on cheeks

If none of above symptoms appear, the food can be considered safe. It still should not be eaten too often or too much at any one time.

If any symptoms occur - stop, wait for 4 days before introducing any new food.

When not testing a food, avoid giving the same food in a run over a period of many days. Vary the foods as much as possible.

During this time (until 12 months), remember- Milk (breast or other) is the most important food. Don't give too many solids or child will refuse to drink enough milk.

At 1st, feed solids before milk, and give baby the amount they take happily. Initially, strained food should be fairly runny. Flecks of banana and spinach etc often appear in stools-it's normal.

