



PATIENT EDUCATION



Introducing Peanut and Other Allergenic Foods to Your Baby

MAYO CLINIC CHILDREN'S CENTER



BARBARA WOODWARD LIPS
PATIENT EDUCATION CENTER

Mayo Clinic Children's Center

For more than 100 years, teams of physicians have cared for children at Mayo Clinic.

T. DENNY SANFORD PEDIATRIC CENTER

MAYO EUGENIO LITTA CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Pediatric Sub-Specialties in the following areas:

Allergy and Immunology	General Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine	Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
Anesthesiology	Gynecology, Adolescent	Psychiatry and Psychology
Cardiology	Hematology and Oncology	Pulmonology
Cardiovascular Surgery	Infectious Diseases	Radiation Oncology
Child and Family Advocacy Program	Medical Genetics	Radiology
Community Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine	Neonatal Medicine	Regional (Health System) Pediatrics
Critical Care	Nephrology	Research
Dermatology	Neurology	Rheumatology
Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics	Neurosurgery	Sleep Medicine Center
Emergency Medicine	Ophthalmology	Speech Pathology
Endocrinology and Metabolism	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery	Surgery
Gastroenterology and Hepatology	Orthopedic Surgery	Urology
	Otorhinolaryngology (ENT)	
	Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	

Pediatric Specialty Clinics:

Adrenoleukodystrophy Clinic	Dermatology Genetics Clinic	Neonatal Follow-Up Clinic
Aerodigestive Clinic	Diabetes Clinic	Neuromuscular Clinic
Anxiety Disorders Clinic and Intensive Therapy Program	Eating Disorders Clinic	Pain Clinic
Arrhythmia and Device Placement Clinic	Eosinophilic Esophagitis Clinic	Pain Rehabilitation Center
Asthma Center	Epilepsy Clinic	Pediatric Diagnostic Referral Clinic
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD) Clinic	Erythromelalgia Clinic	Pediatric Level 1 Trauma Center
Bariatric Surgery Clinic	Facial Paralysis and Reanimation Clinic	Plagiocephaly Program
Brain Injury Program	Feeding Program	Pulmonary Hypertension Program
Brain Tumor Clinic	Fertility Preservation	Renal Stone Clinic
Cerebral Palsy Clinic	Fetal Surgery Program	Spina Bifida Clinic
Chemotherapy/Radiation Long-Term Effects Clinic	Friedreich's Ataxia Clinic	Spinal Deformities Clinic
Child and Adolescent Intensive Mood Program (CAIMP)	Functional Movement Disorder Program	Sports Medicine Center
Childhood Sarcoma Clinic	Heart Failure Clinic	Thyroid Nodule/Cancer Clinic
ComPASS (Palliative Care and Integrative Medicine)	Hemophilia/Coagulopathy Clinic	Transgender Clinic
Congenital Heart Clinic	Hyperlipidemia Program	Transitions Program
Constraint Induced Movement Therapy Program	Immunodeficiency Disorders Clinic	Transplant Center
Craniofacial Clinic	Inflammatory Bowel Disease Clinic	Travel Clinic
Cystic Fibrosis Center	Learning Disorders Assessment Clinic	Vascular Malformations
Dana Child Developmental and Learning Disorders Program	Long QT Syndrome Clinic	Velo-Pharyngeal Insufficiency Clinic
	Marfan Syndrome Clinic	Voiding Clinic
	Metabolic Bone Clinic	Weight Management Clinic
	Mood Disorders Clinic	

New Research About Introducing Peanut to Your Baby

In the past, health care professionals thought parents should wait to feed their baby peanut, a food that is known to cause allergic reactions for some people. But new research has changed that thinking. Experts say that giving babies peanut as young as 4 months may help prevent lifelong allergies to peanut.

Experts also think that introducing your baby at a young age to other foods that are known to cause allergic reactions, called allergenic foods, may help prevent your baby from having lifelong allergies to these foods.

Allergenic foods include the following:

- Peanut.
- Tree nuts, such as almond, walnut and pecan.
- Egg.
- Milk.
- Soy.
- Wheat.
- Seafood, such as shellfish and fish, including freshwater fish.

If you have questions or want more information after you read this, talk to your baby's health care team.

Read all of this information before you introduce your baby to peanut or other allergenic foods.

When Should You Introduce Peanut to Your Baby?

It's important to introduce peanut to your baby. This is to help prevent your baby from having a life-long allergy to peanut. To determine if your baby is ready, your baby should be:

- At least 4 months of age.
- Able to eat solid foods.
- Healthy—with no virus or illness.
- Developmentally ready for solid foods. This means they can sit up well with support.

Do not wait to introduce your baby to allergic foods. The earlier your baby is introduced to peanut, such as around 4 months of age, the better chance they may have of not being allergic to it.

Getting Ready to Introduce Peanut and Other Allergenic Foods to Babies

Before you introduce peanut or any food that is more likely to cause an allergy, be sure to follow these instructions.

Make a plan

Choosing the right time and place is important for your baby's safety.

- **Plan enough time.** Do not rush. Make sure you have enough time to slowly introduce the food to your baby. And make sure you have at least 2 hours to watch your baby for signs of a reaction after the feeding.
- **Be at home.** Do not introduce this kind of food to your baby at a restaurant or when they are at daycare.
- **Be focused.** Make sure you can give your baby your full attention, so you can watch for signs of an allergic reaction.

Know The Signs and Symptoms of an Allergic Reaction

Most babies who have an allergic reaction to food have symptoms within two hours.

When to get emergency medical care

Get emergency medical care if your baby has any of these symptoms after trying peanut or other allergenic foods.

- Wheezing, hoarseness, coughing, or trouble breathing.
- Swelling of the face, tongue or lips.
- Hives all over the body.
- Change in color of skin, such as red, pale or blue.
- Sudden vomiting.
- Sudden diarrhea.
- Sudden tiredness or loss of consciousness.

When to contact your baby's health care professional

Contact your baby's health care professional if your baby has these mild symptoms after trying peanut or other allergenic foods.

- A minor skin rash.
- 1 or 2 hives around the mouth and face.

If you are worried about any other signs, stop feeding your baby the food and contact your baby's health care professional.

How to Introduce Peanut to Babies

When you introduce peanut, plan to mix it with another food. The food you mix it with should be something your baby already eats, likes, is not allergic to, and helps to thin out the mixture.

For example, mix a little peanut butter with any of the following:

- Water.
- Breastmilk or formula.
- Infant cereal.
- Sweet potatoes.
- Bananas.
- Another pureed food.

There are other ways to introduce peanut to your baby, such as a peanut powder or a puff corn snack. Your baby's health care team can tell you more about these options.

Before you introduce peanut, apply petroleum jelly, or Vaseline, to the area around your baby's mouth. This is to help prevent a contact rash if they do have an allergy.

Risk of choking

Peanut butter and nuts are foods with a high risk to cause choking if they are not prepared correctly for a baby.

- Do not serve whole nuts.
- Do not give peanut butter directly from a spoon or in lumps.

Introducing other allergenic foods to babies

When introducing allergenic foods to your baby, consider the texture of the food. Your baby may go through stages in which they like different textures. The allergenic foods you introduce to your baby should be textures your baby eats and likes.

Notes

Notes



This information is for your education only. It does not replace medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. New medical research or practices may change this information. If you have questions about a medical condition, talk with a member of your health care team.

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BARBARA WOODWARD LIPS PATIENT EDUCATION CENTER

Mrs. Lips, a resident of San Antonio, Texas, was a loyal Mayo Clinic patient of more than 40 years and a self-made business leader who significantly expanded her family's activities in oil, gas and ranching. Upon her death in 1995, Mrs. Lips paid the ultimate compliment by leaving her entire estate to Mayo Clinic. By naming the Barbara Woodward Lips Patient Education Center, Mayo honors her generosity, her love of learning, her belief in patient empowerment and her dedication to high-quality care.

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