

# Food Safety for Families

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## Baby's First Solid Foods

Dear Parents,

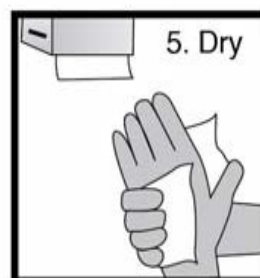
Introducing solid foods is an important step in your baby's development. A healthy infant is ready to digest foods by 4-6 months of age. The proper feeding procedures can prevent your baby from choking or becoming sick. Infants have a higher rate of many foodborne illnesses than adults. It takes less bacteria (germs) to make an infant sick than it does for an adult. Harmful bacteria are more likely to cause foodborne illness to infants because their immune systems are not fully developed.



### **First things first...**

Wash your hands. Sit your baby in his/her highchair. Have them sit up straight and face you. Your baby will be able to swallow better and is less likely to choke. Wait for your baby to pay attention to you and open their mouth. Feed as slowly or as fast as your baby wants to.

## 6 Easy Steps to Proper Hand Washing:



### **Paper Towel or Cloth Towel?**

In your home, assign each person their own towel for drying their hands. Change with clean, fresh towels often. Wash the dirty towels in the washer on the hot cycle with detergent.

**What's 15 seconds?** Sing Happy Birthday two times!

## Baby's First Solid Foods



### FightBac!®

Bacteria (germs), viruses and parasites are everywhere in the environment! They are organisms that you cannot see, smell, or taste. In fact, they can contaminate food and cause life-threatening illness. Foodborne illness (food poisoning) can strike anyone, especially young children, infants, pregnant women (it endangers their unborn babies too), older adults, and persons with weak immune systems.

### What about Allergies?

Infants with family history of a food allergy should be breastfed for as long as possible and should **NOT** start eating complementary foods until 4-6 months of age. Wait to introduce the 8 major food allergens (eggs, wheat, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, milk, fish and shellfish) until well after the first year of life. When you do introduce these foods, do so one at a time.

Try each new food for 2-3 days and wait 3-5 days before introducing another new food to check for any reactions. There are many other foods that can cause allergic reactions, they just aren't as common as the major 8 listed above. Typical signs of an allergic reaction are:

- Rashes, hives, itching or eczema
- Swelling of lips, face, tongue, throat or other parts of the body.
- Wheezing, nasal congestion or trouble breathing
- Abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting



### Feeding from a Jar

When you feed your infant foods from a jar portion out the amount to be used during that feeding into another container before feeding. The rest of the jar can be put back in the refrigerator uncontaminated. **Do NOT** "double dip" the feeding spoon into the jar.

Storage of baby food jars that have been contaminated (by "double dipping") is one of the most common ways infants become sick with a foodborne illness. Transferring food to a serving dish is a simple preventative measure to keep your baby healthy.

