

# Eggs, a **HEALTHY** food for your baby



## HEALTH CANADA HAS NEW INFANT FEEDING GUIDELINES

### Your baby can now eat the **WHOLE EGG** at 6 months!

New scientific evidence shows that you can introduce the whole egg at 6 months of age. This includes infants with or without a family history of food allergies! If there is a family history of an egg allergy, it's suggested that you speak to your health care provider for more information on the introduction of eggs into your baby's diet.

Eggs are a nutrient-rich food that can be added to your baby's diet at the same time as meat purees and other meat alternatives. Ensure that your baby enjoys eggs that are well cooked as the immune system continues to develop at this stage of life.

#### Reference

1. Koplin, J.J., et al. Can early introduction of egg prevent egg allergy in infants? A population based study. *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*. 2010;126: 807-13.

### Good nutrition for a **HEALTHY** start

It's recommended that healthy term infants are exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months with the introduction of first foods at around 6 months of age. If you choose not to breast-feed, an iron fortified infant formula is the next best choice.

A baby's iron stores begin to diminish at around 6 months of age. Iron-rich foods are recommended as first foods and should be offered 2 or more times a day to help meet their increased need of iron. This can include well-cooked meat, poultry, whole eggs, legumes, and iron-fortified infant cereals.

#### **Introduce ONE food at a time and start with single foods, not mixed.**

If your baby shows signs of an allergy or intolerance, this makes it easier to know which food is causing the problem. Signs of allergy may take up to 3 days to appear, so give the same food for 2 to 4 consecutive days before you try a new one.

The consistency and variety of foods given to your baby will increase as they get older, starting with pureed and mashed foods at 6 months, and progressing to finger foods at 8 months. By 1 year of age, eating a variety of foods from the four food groups in *Canada's Food Guide* in addition to breast milk or formula is desirable.

# Eggs in a **BABY'S** diet...

- are a nutritious source of protein, fat, vitamins A, D, E, and B<sub>12</sub>, folate, and iron.
- have a protein quality that is second only to breast milk.<sup>2</sup>
- require little chewing and are easily digested.
- have a delicate taste that most children enjoy.
- are versatile and economical.

Reference

2. Watson, R. R. *Eggs and Health Promotion*. 1st ed. Ames: Iowa State Press, A Blackwell Publishing Company, 2002

## Mom, did you **KNOW**...

Eggs are an excellent source of the nutrient choline? Studies show that choline plays an important role in brain development and function.<sup>3</sup> Experts recommend that pregnant and lactating women eat eggs to ensure adequate choline intake.



Health Canada also recommends an adequate intake of essential fats such as omega-3 fats during pregnancy for proper neural and visual development of the baby. Omega-3 eggs are a good source of omega-3 fats.

Reference

3. Zeisel SH. Choline: needed for normal development of memory. *J Am Coll Nutr*. 2000;19(Suppl):528S-531S.

## **COOKING** eggs for baby at 6 months

Make sure to hard-cook the egg so both the yolk and white are solid, and then mash and mix with a little breast milk or infant formula. Add cooked egg to your baby's diet gradually, starting with 1½ tsp (7 mL). Do not add salt, sugar, butter or margarine to the egg. Let your baby enjoy the natural flavour of single foods.



**Hard-cooked:** Place cold eggs in a single layer in a saucepan. Cover with at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) cold water over top of the eggs. Cover saucepan and bring quickly to a boil over a high heat. Immediately remove pan from heat to stop boiling. Let eggs stand in water for 18 to 23 minutes. Drain water and immediately run cold water over eggs until cooled. Feed baby or refrigerate immediately and use within 1 week.



**Microwave:** In a microwaveable container, whisk an egg with 1 tbsp (15 mL) breast milk, infant formula or water. Cover with plastic wrap leaving a small steam vent. Microwave on Medium-High (70% power) for 1 minute and 30 seconds to 1 minute and 45 seconds, stirring several times during cooking. Cover and let stand for 30 seconds to 1 minute before feeding.

**Looking for recipes for your baby one year of age or older?** Visit [eggs.ca](http://eggs.ca)

**Egg allergy:** Some babies may have an allergy to the protein found in the egg white. However, evidence now indicates that there is no need to delay or avoid introducing potentially allergenic foods to prevent food allergies.

A doctor, preferably an allergist who is a member of the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, is the best person to diagnose an allergy and assess its seriousness.

For more information, contact your doctor or the Allergy/Asthma Information Association at 1.800.611.7011 [aaia.ca](http://aaia.ca) or [national@aaia.ca](mailto:national@aaia.ca)