

NUTRITION

On Your
Own

Self-Paced Lesson

SP-000-19 8/2004



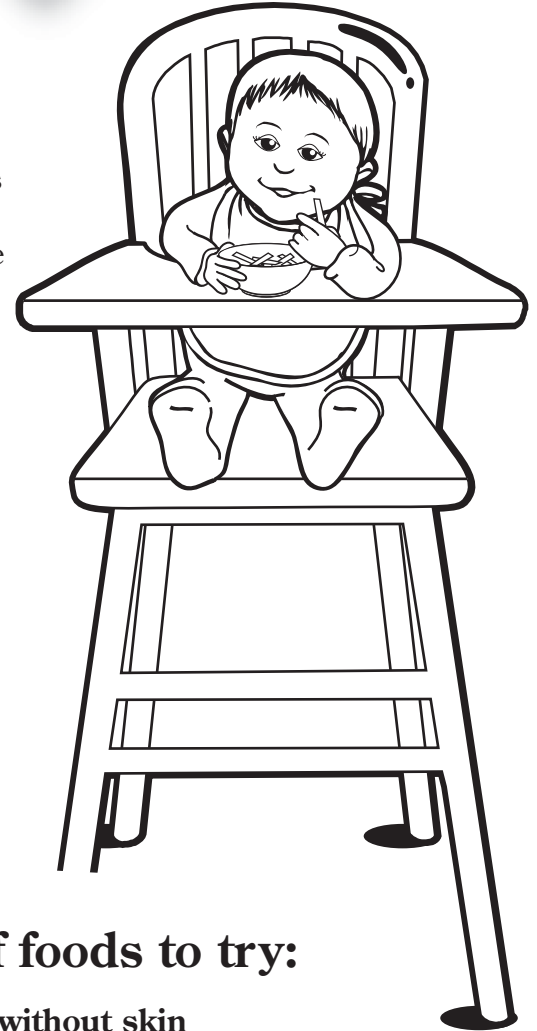
Introducing Finger Foods to Your Child

As your baby gets older, he will love to put all kinds of things in his mouth. He will also begin to show an interest in the foods you eat. How will you know when he is ready to start feeding himself? Here are some signs to look for when you think your baby is ready for finger foods:

- He can sit up on his own without support.
- He can pick up items with his finger and thumb.
- He can put things in his mouth using his hand.

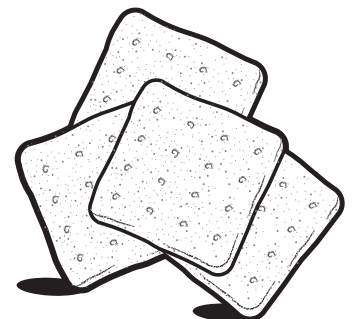
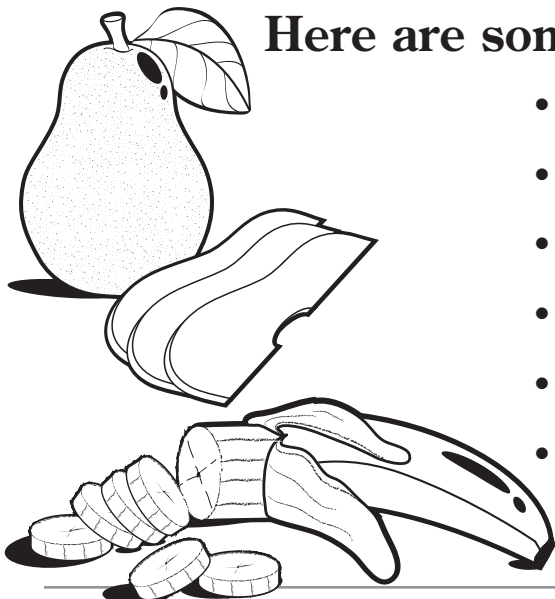
What types of foods should you give your baby when he is ready? Some good rules to follow are:

- The food is easy to pick up.
- The food is soft enough to chew easily.
- The food is cut into long, thin slices, or soft, small pieces that will not cause choking.



Here are some examples of foods to try:

- Pieces of ripe fruit, without skin
- Teething biscuits
- Cooked pasta
- Crackers
- Pieces of soft-cooked vegetables
- Small pieces of bread



Children can choke while eating — especially babies and toddlers who are learning to eat solid foods.

Here are some quick tips on preventing your child from choking:

- **Do not** give food to your baby when he is lying down or walking around.
- **Avoid** foods like hard candy and round hot dog slices.
- **Do not** give round (ball- or disk-shaped) foods to your baby, such as grapes, raisins, and peanuts.
- **Avoid** foods that are firm, smooth, sticky, or slick, such as chips, peanut butter, and chewing gum.

Here is an easy recipe for a finger food to give your child. Small children do not like highly seasoned foods. This recipe appeals to them because they can taste the vegetables without other flavors being in the food.

**FINGER FOOD
RECIPE**

¼ cup green beans, cleaned and strings removed

¼ cup carrots, peeled and cut into long slices or small pieces

1 cup water, boiling

1. Put the carrots and green beans into the boiling water, and cook until they are soft.
2. Take the vegetables out of the water, and let them cool.
3. Serve.

Feeding Finger Foods to Your Baby

1. Draw a circle around the foods that are unsafe to give to your child.

soft vegetables	raisins
round hot dog slices	peanuts
small piece of bread	raw carrots
cooked pasta	peanut butter
hard candy	whole grapes

2. It is OK to let your child eat while walking around. (Circle one.)

True False

3. List two ways you will know when your child is ready to feed himself finger foods.

1. _____

2. _____

