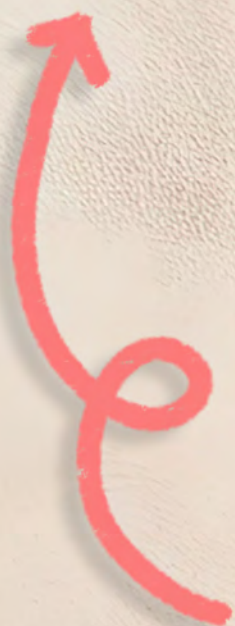


Introduction to solid foods

A guide of tips and practical
recipes for moms



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Hi guys!

I am Larissa Lopes, a gastronome, chef with over 20 years of experience, married and mother of 3 daughters. Here, I bring to you a little bit of my professional and personal knowledge. Throughout more than 20 years of experience in motherhood and gastronomy, I have learned a lot about introducing food and I come to share with you. I made this e-book with great care, and I hope you like it.

Studies show that introducing solid foods begins long before the act of eating itself. Solid food introduction is seen in a broader sense, starting from the conception of the fetus and continuing until the child's first 2 years of life. These studies prove that poor fetal nutrition can have irreversible negative impacts on children's health. These children may become future adults with diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, and various others.

If it's a planned pregnancy, it's important to undergo tests and consultations with healthcare professionals before conceiving to assess the possible nutritional imbalances of the future mother. If it's an unexpected pregnancy, it's important to start prenatal care as soon as possible to also assess possible nutritional imbalances. In these exams, it's crucial to check some nutrients such as iron, folic acid, vitamin B12, calcium, vitamin D, among others.

Water intake and rest are also essential for the absorption of nutrients from food. It's recommended to drink at least 35 ml of water per kilogram (e.g., 60 kg x 35 ml = 2,100 ml of water daily) of body weight. It's also recommended to sleep for 6 to 8 hours of continuous sleep daily.

When starting the baby's breastfeeding phase, it's important to have a correct balance between energy expenditure to maintain the mother's body and milk production. On average, a mother produces about 780 ml of breast milk daily. So, imagine how nutritionally prepared the mother's body must be to produce this amount. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that in the first 6 months of life, the baby be exclusively breastfed and that breastfeeding be continued until 2 years of age while complementary feeding is introduced. Breastfeeding not only strengthens the bond with the mother but also has a proven protective role for the baby, preventing the development of diseases such as asthma, atopic dermatitis, and aiding the baby's immune system.

The composition of breast milk varies according to the baby's needs. In the first 7 days after birth, milk (also called colostrum) is rich in protein and essentially has immunological functions that protect the baby. Between the 8th and 20th days, there is production of transitional milk, still containing the properties of colostrum but also rich in lactose to accompany the baby's growth. After this stage, the milk becomes mature milk, which also presents immunological components and is rich in carbohydrates and fat.

Solid food introduction is defined as the process of offering other foods besides milk to the baby. According to the WHO (World Health Organization), we should start it from the 6th month of life, and we should also observe readiness signs (signs that indicate that the baby is ready to receive other foods besides milk). Being able to hold the spine and neck, showing interest in food, and putting things in the mouth are some of the readiness signs.

Solid food introduction should start by offering all food groups and in varied textures. Fruits, vegetables, grains, meats, dairy products, and proteins can be initially offered separately and gradually combined. Allergenic foods such as peanuts, eggs, seafood can be offered in small quantities and one at a time within the immunological window (between 6 and 9 months). After offering these foods, it's always important for the caregiver to observe possible signs of intolerance or allergy. Salt and sugar should not be consumed during the first year of life, just like all foods containing additives, for example: sugary drinks, cakes, and cookies.

Currently, there are 3 methods of introducing solid foods, and each caregiver chooses which method best suits the reality of each family. They are:

Traditional Method: You offer the food to your child in their mouth. Depending on the food, you can mash it well with a fork (rice, beans, eggplant, carrot, etc.) or cut it very small (meat, chicken, spinach, etc.), but never blended or sieved.

BLW Method (baby-led weaning): This method is very different from the first one because here it's advocated that the baby has more autonomy. The baby himself picks up the food and puts it in his mouth. Foods should be offered in soft pieces so that the baby can pick up and bite.

Participatory Method: In this case, you let the baby eat on their own (as in BLW), but intervene when necessary, encouraging and facilitating the meal with a spoon. Foods can be in pieces or mashed. It's basically a mixture of the previous two methods.

In the first few days, fruits are introduced as a complement without replacing milk. You can start with one fruit every 2 days in the morning snack, always varying the flavors. Everything is learning at this stage, even if the baby just plays, gets dirty, and doesn't eat, you should keep trying. After 10/15 days, it's time to include lunch. Similarly, offer a new food every 2 days until the baby has tried all **food groups***. The 5 food groups are: rice/tubers, proteins, legumes, green vegetables, and colored vegetables. Initially, it may be difficult to replace a breastfeeding session with a meal. Some children may take longer to adapt, so respect the baby's will. Be patient and don't give up.

Proteins

Chicken
Beef
Fish
Seafood
Egg



Legumes

Black beans
Carioca beans (pinto
beans)
White beans
Lentils
Peas
Chickpeas



Green vegetables

Chayote
Zucchini
Broccoli
Green beans
Okra
Chayote squash
Gourd
Kale
Spinach
Green cabbage



Colorful vegetables

Carrot
Pumpkin
Beetroot
Kale
Cauliflower
Red cabbage
Eggplant



Rice/Tubers

White rice	Potato
Brown rice	Sweet potato
Pasta	Arracacha
Cassava (Manioc)	Yam



After the morning snacks and lunch are stabilized, we can do the same process with afternoon snack and dinner. And so create a feeding routine for your baby. Remember that breastfeeding continues on demand, but we should not replace meals with milk.

Storage: In the rush of life, we often can't cook every day, so the best option is to freeze the food. I suggest buying BPA-free ice trays with a lid and portioning your baby's meals. Frozen foods last up to 1 month in the freezer and if refrigerated, up to 2 days. To defrost, the best option is in a water bath or you can also use the microwave.

tips

- Always follow the guidance and recommendations of your pediatrician
- Make enjoyable meals and sit at the table
- No distractions with television or cell phones (cell phone only for taking beautiful photos of your baby eating)
- Whenever possible, eat with your baby, they learn by imitation
- During the day, offer water on demand
- Have a routine, it will make your life and the baby's easier
- I know the mess can be big, but think that this is a phase and that soon you will miss it
- Do not use salt and sugar in preparations, but use and enjoy **fresh seasonings***

*fresh seasonings

Fresh herbs

Parsley	Oregano
Green onions	Thyme
Cilantro	Rosemary
Basil	Sage
Bay leaf	



Spices

Sweet paprika
Cumin
Nutmeg



Aromatic vegetables

Onion
Celery
Garlic
Leek





Solid food introduction is an "adventure" that is often stressful and tiring, but it can also be **light, creative** and **enjoyable**. Remember that **your baby is a blank sheet** and is learning everything, and this phase is **essential** for their **future** and **eating habits memory**.

Here are some recipes that were a success in my house, I hope you enjoy them and come cook with me anytime!



— **Let's start with the basics:**



Basic Chicken for Recipes

2 chicken breasts

2 cloves of garlic

¼ grated onion

Drizzle of olive oil, parsley, or green onions

(this chicken can be enriched with spinach, carrot, kale, pumpkin...)

+6
months

Preparation: Sauté the onion and garlic with olive oil, add the diced chicken. Let it brown and add water gradually until the chicken is cooked.

Basic Ground Beef for Recipes

500g lean ground beef

2 cloves of garlic

½ grated onion

Drizzle of olive oil, parsley, or green onions

(this meat can be enriched with spinach, carrot, kale, pumpkin...)

+6
months

Preparation: Sauté the meat with the onion and garlic. Let it brown and add water until the meat is loose and cooked.

Strong beans

250g black or brown beans

2 cloves of garlic

½ grated onion

Drizzle of olive oil

Cubed pumpkin

Preparation: Sauté the onion and garlic with olive oil, add the beans and pumpkin. Let it sauté a bit, add coriander, and gradually add hot water until the beans are tender.

*** Soak the beans for 24 hours in the refrigerator with lemon slices inside and change the water at least 3 times.**

+6
months

Rice Popeye

+6
months

½ cup of white rice

1 clove of garlic

¼ grated onion

A handful of spinach leaves

Drizzle of olive oil

Preparation: Sauté the onion and garlic with olive oil, add the spinach, let it sauté and add 1 and ½ cups of hot water.





- Now we can start getting creative...





Chicken pie

- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons of shredded chicken (basic chicken recipe)
- 1 tablespoon of oats
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder

Preparation: Mix all ingredients and place in the air fryer (180°C) until golden brown.

+9
months

Healthy nugget

- ½ kg chicken breast
- ½ small onion
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 clove of garlic
- 300g almond flour
- Paprika and parsley

Preparation: In a food processor, mix all ingredients until you get a homogeneous paste. With wet hands, shape the chicken paste into nugget shapes and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Then, place in the air fryer (180°C) until golden brown.

+12
months



Healthy coxinha

- 2 cups of shredded chicken basic chicken recipe
- 1 cup of cooked and mashed sweet potato
- 1 egg
- Almond flour for breading
- Parsley and green onions

Preparation: In a bowl, mix all ingredients until you get a dough. Wet your hands, shape the coxinhas, and bread them with almond flour. Place in the air fryer (180°C) until golden brown.

+6
months





Nutritious Pancake

- 1 cup of almond flour
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 small cooked beet
- 1 cup of beet cooking water
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1 cup of ground beef (basic ground beef recipe) for stuffing

Preparation: Mix all ingredients in a blender. In a greased pan, bake the pancake batter into disks and then fill with ground beef.

***Beet can be replaced with carrots, spinach, kale.**

+12
months

Banana cookies

- 2 ripe bananas
- ½ cup of oat flakes
- 1 tablespoon of 100% cocoa

+9
months

Preparation: Mash the bananas well, add the oats and cocoa, shape the cookies with the help of 2 spoons, and bake them in a pan greased with olive oil.



Sweet potato bread

- 1 ½ cup of sweet potato
- 1 cup of sweet potato flour
- 1 cup of sweet potato flour
- ¼ cup of olive oil

Preparation: Mix all ingredients until you get a homogeneous dough. Shape the rolls into balls and bake in the air fryer (180°C) until cooked.

+9
months



Healthy Danoninho (Little Danone) -

- 1 banana
- 6 strawberries
- ½ cup of cooked yam

Preparation: Blend all the ingredients in a blender and it's ready to be served.

* **Do not sift**

+6
months

Mango danoninho -

- 1 avocado
- 1 mango

Preparation: Blend everything in the blender, and it's ready to be served.

+6
months



Sweet Potato Cookie -

- 1 ½ cups of cooked sweet potato
- 1 ½ cups of oat flour
- ¼ cup of melted butter
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder

Preparation: Mash the potatoes and add the remaining ingredients. Mix until it forms a dough that doesn't stick to your hands. Roll out the dough and cut it into desired shapes. Bake in the oven (180°C) for about 15 minutes.

+12
months





Orange cake

- 1 peeled orange
- 1 egg
- 1 cup of oat bran
- 1/3 cup of raisins
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder

Preparation: Mix all ingredients in a blender, place in cupcake molds, and bake in the air fryer (180°C).

***test with a toothpick to come out clean**

+9
months

Oat waffle

- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon of chia seeds
- 2 tablespoons of oat bran
- 1 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1 teaspoon of honey
- Cinnamon and vanilla to taste

Preparation: Mix all ingredients in a blender and bake in a waffle maker or in a pan greased with olive oil.



+24
months

Tilapia patty

- 1 tilapia fillet
- 1 small cooked sweet potato
- 1/2 lemon
- Green onions, smoked paprika

Preparation: Season the tilapia with smoked paprika and lemon. Grill the tilapia with a drizzle of olive oil and shred with a fork. Mash the sweet potato with the remaining ingredients and shape into patties. Bake in the air fryer (180°C) until golden brown.

+6
months



Fried rice for babies

+9
months

1 cup of cooked rice (basic rice)

½ cup of shredded chicken (basic chicken recipe)

1 egg

¼ cup of finely chopped onion

¼ cup of finely chopped carrot

¼ cup of frozen peas

¼ cup of finely chopped cauliflower

Drizzle of olive oil and chopped green onions

Preparation: In a skillet, start by sautéing the onion with a drizzle of olive oil, add the rest of the vegetables and sauté. Then add the rice and chicken. Finally, add the egg and finish with chopped green onions.





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by Larissa Lopes