



# Chirothots

By Tim Wood, D.C.  
**Starting Kids Off Right!**



This week's topic is about the best way to introduce different foods to children. If you don't have young children or grandchildren please pass this onto people who do. There is a lot of confusion and bad advice when it comes to what foods to introduce to your child first and when to start. **The results can negatively effect children's long term health.** Everyone does the best they can with the information they have. My parent's generation were often told to use formula, and put their children onto rice pablum as early as possible, often with babies as young as 2 months. They will say "you survived!" but food allergies skyrocketed as a result. Make your choices, thank people for their input but ask that they not be offended if you do things differently.

## **WHEN TO INTRODUCE FOODS**

The digestive tract of a baby is very immature until around 9 months of age. Basically every person's intestines (lower digestive tract) have little holes in them that allow the small molecules the food has been broken down into in the upper digestive system to enter into the person's blood carrying with them vitamins and minerals. **A newborn's intestines have HUGE holes which allow anything to pass into their blood. It is assumed only breast milk will enter their digestive system** and if this is the case there is no problem. **However if formula is introduced or food is introduced too early then molecules such as cow's milk proteins will enter the blood which is bad and increases allergies and effects the immune system.** This is inherently a problem with formula feeding so explore ALL options before turning to that and talk to Tim or Suzie to make sure there isn't a natural way of stimulating breast milk production or solving problems naturally! The holes in the intestine get smaller and smaller as the baby ages but it isn't until the child is 9 months old that they are small enough to function like an adult or older child's digestive system. **So it is really important that if you introduce food before 9 months of age there is no allergen or large protein molecules in it! Our culture tends to introduces food far too early to babies so there will be pressure for you to do the same.** Often people will tell you if your child reaches for food they are ready for solids. Between 4 and 6 months children start being able to reach out and grab things so they reach for food. If you put a toy in front of them they reach for that as well so don't use this as a measure of when to feed your child. **In our experience 8 or 9 months is a more natural time to introduce solids as they have teeth, and can feed themselves finger foods in chunks or from a spoon.** From 6-9 months the volume of food they eat is very small anyway, it is a pain to puree, and there are few good food choices so you rotate between only a few foods for 3 or 4 months. **Remember it is much worse to introduce food too early than waiting until 12 months.** If you start with food before 9 months be very careful to follow the advice below. We never recommend starting a child on solids before 6 months as their system is too immature. **Food should not be the main part of their diet until 1 yr old.**

## **WHAT FOODS TO INTRODUCE FIRST**

If you wait until 9 months you may be able to go right into finger foods which they can chew on or you cut into little bites. This is much easier, Suzie recommends that! **Introduce foods for at least 3-4 days on their own to test for any allergic reaction by skin, behavior or temperature changes.** Then introduce another food on it's own for 3-4 days, and work through the options. Mash up the food into a paste for babies 6-9 months and then make it chunkier as they get older or give them chunks they can put into their own mouth. Mix it with breast milk or breast feed them right before or after they eat so they can digest the food easier. Give them a tiny amount (2 teaspoons) until they show you they want more. As long as they are breast feeding they have no requirement for the food, it is a bonus!

## **BEGINNING HEALTHY EATING HABITS – Role Model**

Children learn by copying, and there siblings and parents are their role models. We believe if they see their role models eating fruits and vegetables every meal they will eventually do the same. If the rest of the family is eating fish sticks while you are trying to feed Johnny broccoli – it's over! If you are pounding Doritos while trying to spoon feed him he might not love his asparagus.

## **FOODS SAFE FROM 6 MONTHS ON: (try for foods that can be eaten raw, and ALWAYS buy organic)**

**Avocado** – this is almost a perfect food and is the BEST first food for kids.

**Vegetables** – Best examples are deeply colored ones as they are more nutrient dense, use a variety of colors for interest sake and nutrition. Try avocado, then sweet potato, squashes, carrot, zucchini, peas, etc...

**Fruits** – banana (introduce really slowly mixed with other food as it will cause constipation), apples, peaches, pears, plums are great and can be cooked and mashed into sauces or cut into finger foods. Mango and melon are favorites for many babies.

**Grains** - Oats and brown rice are safe from 9 months but can wait. All other grains should wait until 1 year.

**Egg Yolks** – we suggest from 9-12 months starting to mix in 1 egg yolk a day. Organic is best, omega 3 eggs 2<sup>nd</sup> best. The egg white is a common allergen so hard-boil the egg, separate the white off the yolk and wash off the yolk to remove any egg white. Stirring it into mashed avocado works well. Egg yolks are well proven to assist in brain development and increase IQ.

**Vegetable juices** – such as freshly juiced carrots are wonderful starter foods for your baby and you can add in fresh raw greens and veggies (spinach, beets, etc.). Dilute ALL juices by double the amount of spring water.

## **FOODS TO WAIT UNTIL CHILD IS 12 MONTHS OLD:**

**Dairy** -organic yogurt is the only cow dairy we recommend feeding children, it is meant for baby cows! We feed our son organic cheese as well but recommend using almond milk instead of cow's milk, or use goat dairy.

**Grains and Rice** –whole oats can be introduced earlier, use organic and brown or whole grain versions of all other grains. Avoid white flour always, and choose sprouted grain breads.

**Meat, Poultry, and Fish** – Choose grass fed beef, wild red meat and fish when possible, and organic versions of all others to avoid growth hormone and antibiotics. The cost is not a huge factor as they will eat a very small quantity. Choose wild spring, chum, coho and sockeye salmon as they feed on plankton so they are lower in mercury which is very dangerous to kids. Avoid canned tuna.

**Nuts** – wait until 2 years for peanuts. Look for raw nuts as they are better and choose unsalted. Almond butter, cashew butter and sesame butter are terrific sources of protein as are whole cooked chickpeas.

**Citrus Fruits and berries** – These are fair game after 12 months and always favorites.

**Fruit Juices** - Any fruit juices should be of the type found in natural food stores because they are not from concentrate. Concentrated juices have high sugar content and overload the pancreas (link to diabetes) and are a known cause of candidiasis (yeast infection) in children. Fresh juices are far better!

**Sugars** – avoid sugar and artificial sweeteners. Sugar increases hyperactivity, lowers immunity and slows growth. Choose maple syrup or brown rice syrup instead. Honey can be used after 1 year.

**Dairy** – dairy is a big source of growth hormone and antibiotics so we suggest **always** choosing organic dairy or better yet avoiding it altogether (our family eats some cheese and yogurt only). Choose almond milk as the best alternative, brown rice milk is 2<sup>nd</sup>, soya milk 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## **DOES YOUR CHILD NEED SUPPLEMENTS?**

As we discussed last week our belief is that God designed our bodies to live off food and water alone. If you source out organic food, local when available, and encourage eating lots of fruit and vegetables we do not feel supplements are essential with two exceptions. **Omega fats**, using a small amount of fish oil every day.

**Natural bacteria**, using a specific children's probiotic is the other necessary supplement. If your child is not eating veggies for a while buy kid's Greens and put it into a drink to make up for it. None of these supplements is necessary while your child is breast-feeding.

## **OWEN'S FAVORITE SUPER BRAIN, IMMUNE AND HEALTH BOOSTING SMOOTHIE!!!**

Mix an organic banana (frozen for slushy texture), with Jerseyland Organic non-homogenized yogurt, a tiny amount of fish oil, organic frozen berries, and top up with spring water or almond milk to about 500 mL. Use a hand blender or blender to mix it smooth and give half in am, half in pm. Add Greens if desired.

I hope this information helps you make better choices with the foods your children eat. If you introduced food differently that is okay. We all do the best we can with what the info we have. We are constantly trying to give you better information about health so your family can reach their potential for health, vitality and happiness!