

# Four Easy Steps to Prevent Peanut Allergy in Your Baby

Peanut allergy is the most common food allergy in children in the United States. And once you have a peanut allergy it rarely goes away. You usually have it for life!

**But Today, We Can Stop Most Peanut Allergy Before It Starts!**

**Providing infant-safe peanut-containing foods early** can reduce the chance of your baby developing a peanut allergy by as much as 80 percent.<sup>(1)</sup> Guidelines recommend giving infant-safe peanut foods as soon as your baby is ready to safely eat solid foods, as early as 4 to 6 months of age.<sup>(2)</sup>

Follow these simple steps to help prevent a peanut allergy from developing:

## Step 1: Make sure your baby is ready to safely eat pureed or solid foods. Your baby should:

- Be able to sit up on their own and show interest in table foods.
- NOT have had any allergic reaction to peanuts before.
- Be eating other solid foods. Only give peanut foods after your baby has tried several other foods first.
- Be healthy right now (no vomiting, diarrhea, cold, cough, or rash).



**“If your baby has severe eczema or an egg allergy, talk with your baby’s doctor or other primary care provider first because these can make your baby more likely to have a peanut allergy reaction.”**

## Step 2: Choose the peanut-containing food you want to give your baby. Here are three safe options to consider:

- **Option 1:** Creamy peanut butter that you thin by mixing it with breast milk, formula, or water.
- **Option 2:** Peanut flour or peanut powder that you mix into a puree your baby already eats.
- **Option 3:** Puffed snacks made with peanut and corn. For babies younger than 7 months of age, the peanut puffs should be softened with water, breast milk, or formula.



## Step 3: Give your baby the peanut-containing food.



- Start with just a taste. Offer a small amount on the tip of a spoon.
- Continue feeding your baby other foods and watch your baby closely for 10 minutes before giving more peanut food.
- Allergic reaction symptoms can include skin rash or hives (red, itchy bumps), vomiting, swelling of the lips or tongue, coughing, wheezing, or starting to look sick.
- If there is no allergic reaction, slowly give the remaining food.
- If your baby has a reaction, don't feed any more peanut-containing food until you have contacted your baby's health care provider and been told it is safe to do so. If your baby seems to be having trouble breathing, call 911. Keep in mind this is a rare reaction.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** In rare cases, food allergy symptoms can appear up to 2 hours after giving peanut food. So, keep watching your baby for 2 hours.

**“Never feed whole peanuts, chunky peanut butter, or peanut butter straight from a jar to your baby! These are choking hazards.”**



## Step 4: No reaction? Continue to give your baby peanut-containing food 2 to 3 times a week.

- Continuing to provide peanut foods is important for stopping a peanut allergy from developing.
- **It pays to be persistent.** Some babies may not show interest in solid foods at every feeding but continue to offer food consistently. Early introduction is most effective when it starts between 4 and 6 months of age.



**“DON'T DELAY introduction of peanut-containing foods. Delaying may increase the chance of your baby developing a peanut allergy.”**

Visit [FoodAllergyPrevention.org](https://www.foodallergy.org) to find information on the research behind these recommendations along with more details on how to recognize a food allergy reaction and safely feed your baby other top allergen foods as part of a diverse, health diet.

#### References:

1. Du Toit G, Roberts G, Sayre PH, et al. Randomized trial of peanut consumption in infants at risk for peanut allergy. *N Engl J Med.* 2015;372(9):803-813. doi:10.1056/NEJMoa1414850
2. Addendum Guidelines for the Prevention of Peanut Allergy in the United States. <https://www.niaid.nih.gov/sites/default/files/addendum-peanut-allergy-prevention-guidelines.pdf>