

# Feeding your vegan baby



**PLANT-BASED**  
Health Professionals UK

Promoting Sustainable Health and Nutrition

## The second year

**Dr Miriam Martinez-Biarge, Paediatrician**

**From 12 months solid foods should be your baby's main source of energy and nutrients**

At this age most babies will have 3 meals a day plus 1-2 snacks. Growth rate slows after the first birthday and toddlers show much less appetite and more erratic eating habits – this is normal.

**Continue offering foods from the main four groups every day:**

### 1. RIPE FRUIT

#### FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

**Include in every meal.**

This will help your child to absorb more iron from foods

#### PROTEIN-RICH FOODS

Legumes, beans, peanut butter, tofu, tempeh, finely milled nuts and seeds or nut and seed butters). In case of nut allergy, ground seeds or seed butters (pumpkin, sunflower, hemp, linseed, chia) are a good alternative, provided an allergy to them has been ruled out

### 2. COOKED VEGETABLES

#### SALT

Meals can be salted now, but try to keep salt consumption as low as possible



### 3. WHOLE GRAINS AND POTATOES

#### Continue avoiding foods that can cause choking:

Whole nuts and seeds, whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, popcorn, whole olives, raw whole carrots or celery, until your child is 4 to 5 years old

### 4. PROTEIN-RICH FOODS

**Brush your child's teeth twice a day, using a tiny smear of fluoride toothpaste**



[NHS: Looking after your infant's teeth](#)

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### Examples of meals:

#### Breakfast:

- \* Porridge (prepared with soya milk fruit and ground nuts or seeds)
- \* Toast with peanut or nut butter + fruit
- \* Soya yoghurt with muesli + fruit
- \* Oatmeal pancakes with nut butter + fruit
- \* Tofu scramble with toast + fruit
- \* Chia seed pudding + fruit



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### Lunch and dinner:



- \* Lentil soup
- \* Pasta with vegetables and tofu
- \* Couscous, chickpeas and vegetables
- \* Rice or noodles with tempeh
- \* Baked potato with beans
- \* Rice and bean chilli
- \* Minestrone soup with beans
- \* Spaghetti with tomato sauce and soya mince
- \* Mashed potato, peas and tofu
- \* Rice and bean enchilada with avocado.

#### Snacks:

- \* Fruit, soya yoghurt, smoothie (soya milk + fruit and optionally, ground seeds or nuts. Leafy vegetables can be included in small amounts – less than 10% of total volume and this is a good way to introduce these flavours to children)
- \* Hummus and bread
- \* Hummus with carrots and cucumber
- \* Fruit (apple, pear, banana...) with peanut or nut butter
- \* Toast with avocado
- \* Breastmilk



The WHO recommends breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond.



#### Continued breastfeeding after the first year:

- still provides a significant percentage of the nutritional requirements at this age
- is associated with **important benefits for mother** (reduced risk of breast and ovarian cancer, osteoporosis, obesity and cardiovascular disease) **and child** (reduced risk of childhood leukaemia, asthma, later obesity and cardiovascular disease)

Designed by Kate Dunbar

### Plant milks for toddlers and young children:

**Toddlers who continue breastfeeding** do not need any plant milks; it is better to focus on high-energy and high-iron solid foods

If your baby was having **soya formula**, this can be progressively replaced with **calcium-fortified soya milk**. Choose **low sugar** (2.5 g /100 ml or less) and **low salt** versions (less than 0.1 g / 100 ml). **Avoid light or reduced-fat versions**



**An alternative to soya milk can be calcium-fortified pea milk**

**Other plant milks** (oat, almond, rice) are **too low in calories and nutrients** for children of this age and **should not** be introduced until the child is 2-3 years old

### Supplements 12 - 24 months

The Department of Health recommends that all children aged 6 months to 5 years are given vitamin supplements containing vitamins A, C and D every day, because many children do not eat a varied diet, and especially, do not eat enough fruit, vegetables and legumes. *This recommendation is addressed to the general population and does not take into account the different needs of vegan children.*

If your child is a fussy eater, a multivitamin supplement may be helpful. **Choose a supplement specifically designed for children and do not exceed the recommended daily dose.** Be sure that it includes **50-70 mcg of iodine, 400 IU of plant-based vitamin D3, 100 mg of plant-based DHA and 5 mcg of vitamin B12** per daily dose.

If the supplement contains vitamin C, it is advisable to add an extra dose of **250 mcg** of vitamin B12 per week.

NHS Guide: vitamins for young children

For toddlers who eat a varied diet that includes fruit and vegetables every day, the following supplements will be enough:

**B12** 2.5 – 5 mcg a day or:

- if child breastfeeds **at least** 2-3 times a day **or** eats B12-fortified foods every day (soya milk, soya yoghurt, nutritional yeast): **250 - 300 mcg once a week**
- if child breastfeeds **less than** 2-3 times a day **and does not** eat B12- fortified food regularly: **250 - 300 mcg twice a week**

- For toddlers who breastfeed **less than** 2-3 times a day: **IODINE 50 - 70 mcg a day.** \* Some plant milks are fortified with iodine and in some cases can cover iodine requirements. **If you are using them, check labels before supplementing.**

**DHA** (plant-based): **100 mg a day**

**D3** If insufficient sun exposure: **400 - 600 IU a day** of plant-based vitamin D3

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/vitamins-for-children/>