



Choking Hazards

Your baby is learning how to chew and swallow foods. This means your child may choke. By 12 months old, your child is getting better at eating and may even be feeding themselves. Even though your child can now eat most foods, some are still choking hazards. The way food is prepared may increase the risk for choking. For example, some foods that are served uncooked, whole, or in certain shapes or sizes can be choking hazards. Cutting up food into smaller pieces and mashing foods can help prevent choking.

Here are ways to help prevent your child from choking.

Foods and preparation

- Cook and prepare food to the right shape, size, and texture [for your child's development](#).
- Avoid small, sticky, or hard foods that are hard to chew and swallow.

Meals and snacktime

- Have your child sit up while eating (no lying down, crawling, or walking).
- Have your child sit in a high chair or other safe place.
- Avoid letting your child eat in the car or stroller.
- Keep mealtimes calm. Avoid distractions, disruptions, and rushing when eating.

Always

- Pay close attention to what your child puts in his or her mouth.
- Watch your child at all times while he or she is eating.

Be ready

- Talk to your child's doctor or nurse to learn what to do if your child chokes.

Did You Know?

You can help prevent your child from choking.

To learn more, watch these [videos](#) from 1,000 Days.

Potential Choking Hazards for Young Children

The United States Department of Agriculture's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) put together a [list](#) of foods to avoid because these foods could cause a child to choke. This list may not include all foods which could cause choking. For helpful tips to prevent choking, print this [handout](#) [PDF-896KB] from the United States Department of Agriculture.

Fruits/Vegetables

- Cooked or raw whole corn kernels
- Uncut cherry or grape tomatoes
- Pieces of hard raw vegetables or fruit, such as raw carrots or apples

Proteins

- Whole or chopped nuts and seeds
- Chunks or spoonfuls of nut and seed butters, such as peanut butter
- Tough or large chunks of meat

- Whole pieces of canned fruit
- Uncut grapes, berries, cherries, or melon balls
- Uncooked dried vegetables or fruit, such as raisins

- Hot dogs, meat sticks, or sausages
- Large chunks of cheese, especially string cheese
- Bones in meat or fish
- Whole beans

Grain Products

- Cookies or granola bars
- Potato or corn chips, pretzels, popcorn, or similar snack foods
- Crackers or breads with seeds, nut pieces, or whole grain kernels
- Whole grain kernels of cooked barley, wheat, or other grains
- Plain wheat germ

Sweetened Foods

- Round or hard candy, jelly beans, caramels, gum drops, or gummy candies
- Chewy fruit snacks
- Chewing gum
- Marshmallows

Learn more about [when, what and how to introduce solid foods](#).

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