



Weaning 101

Healthy recipes and tips to wean your baby

By **Natasha Corrett**

With recipes from Lucinda Miller, Ciara Attwell and Lizzie King



MUMS KNOW BEST



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Freezable



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Vegetarian



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Weaning essentials by Mothercare

Natasha Corrett



Natasha Corrett is a well-known healthy cook, wellness writer and author of the Honestly Healthy cookbooks and brand. Having published 4 books in 16 countries and sold over half a million copies, whilst also launching a successful online magazine website, she took some time out from work to have a baby and has now found a gap in the market for healthy pregnancy, baby and family food. In September of 2018 launched her new website;

www.MumsKnowBest.com



Natasha's weaning story

When the time comes to start the weaning process it is like an endless pit of information out there. When do you start? What do you start with feeding them? What foods can you offer and what do you have to stay away from? Spoon-fed or baby led? There are so many questions parents face. Even though I know how to cook and had a vague idea of how I wanted to feed my baby I felt like I was drowning in information. The main question that filled my mind was: If I give him the wrong foods to start with will it be detrimental to his health later? And 'when' to introduce different food groups so not to over laden his digestion and gut. I think a mother's instinct is very strong so for me it was about following that as well as reading as much as I could and speaking to nutritional therapists to point me in the right direction.

I started weaning at 5 months (the NHS recommends to start at 6 months however research says you can start from 20 weeks) because he was very hungry and my breast milk just wasn't enough to fill him up.

I took the whole weaning process very slowly with tastes and types of food. I felt that a baby's gut is so immature it needed to be introduced slowly and gradually and he had a lifetime of eating everything. Rudy definitely told me when he was ready for something new. And I am honestly glad that I did it that way because it kept it interesting for him and hardly got bored with the foods I offered to him.

"After turning to the support and community of Instagram I realised that a space needed to exist to support all parents. Everyone has a great dish they make for the family so why not share with each other in one place.

I don't know any mother or parent that isn't confused by weaning, it is always a worrying time so through the mistakes I have made the expert advice I have been given I want to share my knowledge to make the process a little less daunting for others.

I believe you should be able to cook one meal for the whole family, from weaning to lunch boxes: one dish can be adapted to suit everyone

My focus is on cooking from scratch so you can feed your family healthy food without spending hours in the kitchen each day. " @natashacorrett

First tastes

Start by introducing individual flavoured purees for 3 days at a time. This will ensure that you will see if they have any allergies to the foods you are feeding them. Whether you are breastfeeding or formula feeding use milk to blend the steamed veggies. You can batch cook and then freeze in portion size pots. After a couple of weeks you can start mixing flavours but I made sure that I still let Rudy taste the individual flavours before mixing so he could get a taste for them.

Week 1

Broccoli
Pea
Courgette
Spinach

Week 2

Sweet Potato
Butternut Squash
Carrot

Week 3

Apple & Butternut
Beetroot + Avocado
Swede & Cavolo Nero

Week 4

Same as Week 3 +
added some fruit to
Papaya + Avocado
Banana + Avocado

Week 5

Blended oats into a flour to
make porridge adding the
puree to flavour. I made the
porridge with raw coconut
water. You can also use
breast or formula milk or
sterilised water.

This week I introduced finger foods:

Avocado
Cucumber
Pear

Tip: when starting the weaning process babies can get constipated so you can blend up some cooked pear or apple prune puree to help. Just a couple tsp normally did the trick for Rudy.

Important: I would highly recommend doing a baby first aid course so if your baby chokes you will know how to handle it. Twice Rudy choked and I had to put him over my knee and hit his back to get what was lodged out. If I hadn't done the course I wouldn't have known what to do.

Second tastes

From week 6-8 of weaning Rudy was ready for some more new tastes alongside the more simple purees and to start playing with some more finger foods. Here are some of the recipes I tried out on him that he loved.

Purees:

Butterbean, pea, broccoli, parsley coconut milk
Blueberry pear oat porridge
Mango cinnamon chia porridge
Courgette spinach omelet
Butternut, split pea lentils & cumin

BLW finger foods recipes:

Banana pancakes
Avocado on toast
Sweet potato polenta sticks
Fritters
Lentil quinoa egg croquettes

This was the time teething was awful for us so a few little foodie tricks that help distract him were:

Frozen dummy

Chamomile soaked flannel and frozen
Breast or formula milk lollies
Coconut yoghurt fruit lollies

Overview of food introductions:

This is by no means what you 'should' be doing but it worked well for Rudy and felt it was a gentle way to introduce food to his system.

Week 1-3 Green veg and root vegetables
Week 3-4 inclusion of fruit
Week 5 – Adding some grains – oats and quinoa
Week 6 + - Eggs, pulses, spices, herbs, coconut, polenta
7 months – Tofu, nut & seed butters, gluten, wheat, all grains
8 months – White fish + Bone broth
9 months – Sheep & goat Dairy & Oily fish
10 months – White meat
12 months – Cow dairy & red meat if you wish.

Nuts | Dairy | Eggs: allergen foods are important to introduce the right way. A small amount for 3 days running - If there is any reaction go straight to a doctor or hospital.

Until a baby is 12 months old they are getting the majority of their calories and nutrients from milk, so taking this slow approach means that by the time they reach 12 months all food groups have been introduced into their diet however if you are breastfeeding vitamin D and iron is very depleted from your milk after 6 months so getting those nutrients in food is very important.

Vitamin D rich foods: Salmon, mackerel, eggs, cheese, mushrooms, sardines

Iron Rich foods: Spinach, black beans, apricots, dates, lentils, red meat, dark meat from poultry, egg yoke.



Tips I learnt along the way

I found that when I ate with Rudy he was less agitated and bored, so sitting down to eat with your baby is a great way to start off good habits and family time. If it is just the two of you then try putting on some music.

When Rudy gets a bug he goes off his food. When this happens for the first time you panic, as a mother's instinct is to feed feed feed! I made the mistake of distracting him with cartoons, bubble machines and books as i was worried if he didnt' eat, firstly he would be hungry but secondly he would not sleep, it ended up causing a lot of bad habits that we ended up having to rectify.

After much research and speaking to experts I have learnt the hard way.

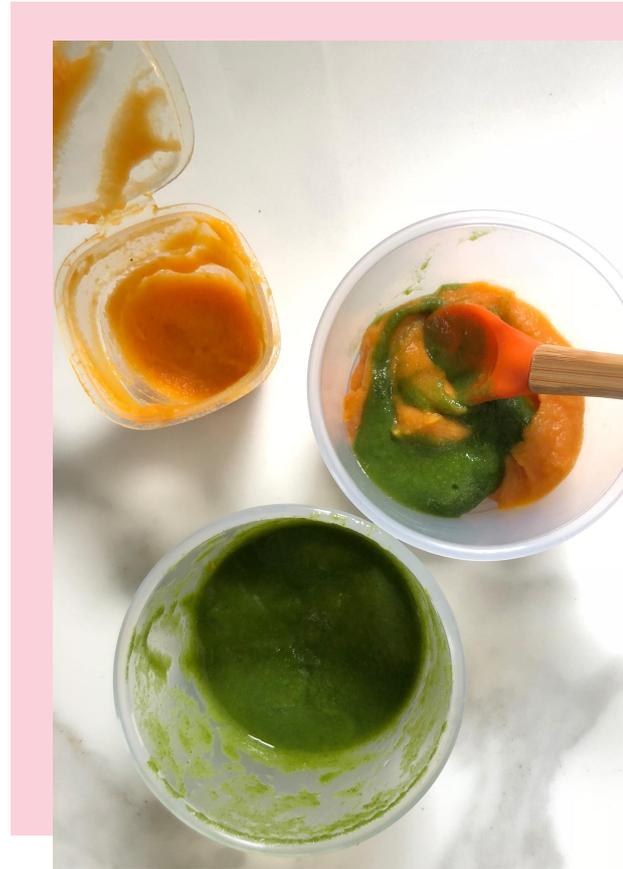
Firstly distraction is not a tool to be used around food. There is a term called 'conscious eating' that is being thrown around the child nutrition world that we as parents need to encourage our children to eat consciously to avoid any bad relationships with food in their future. As a child they know when they are hungry and not. It is our beliefs that a child must eat everything we put out for them but what nannies of 30 years and nutritionist have told me is that *we choose what they eat and they choose when and how much.*

As a complete control freak this is very hard for me to practice but by listening to my sons needs through food he is much happier to sit at the table and eat well.

Tantrums at the table can be a hideous thing to deal with so what I do is allow Rudy to get down and then offer the food again in another 30 minutes. I don't offer a different kind of food as this feeds the notion that 'Mum's a restaurant and I can order what I like!' Not something we want to encourage!

However in time of sickness, offering simple foods they love like pasta, toast and porridge is an argument-free way off getting them to eat something. Nutritionists, doctors and health professionals that I have spoken to say that when the body is in a state of 'healing' especially with a fever you shouldn't force the body to eat if it doesn't want to.

A norland nanny of 30 years said to me 'A child won't starve themselves. If they are hungry they will eat'. I now have a way more relaxed attitude to meal times and because of that Rudy eats better and everyone is happy at the table.



Ciara Attwell

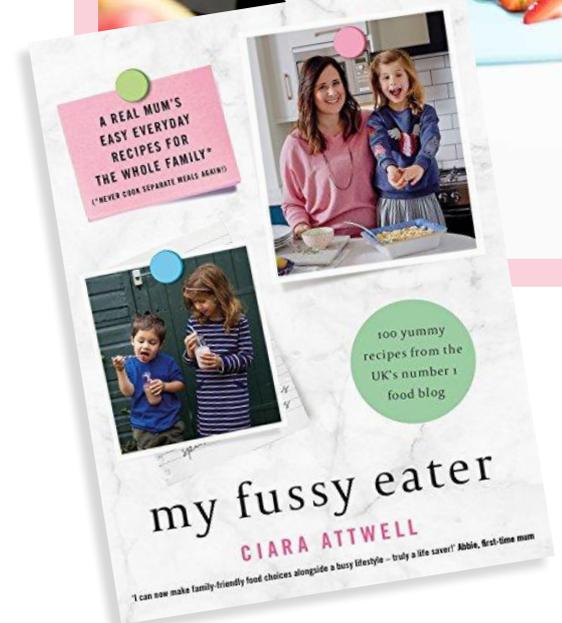
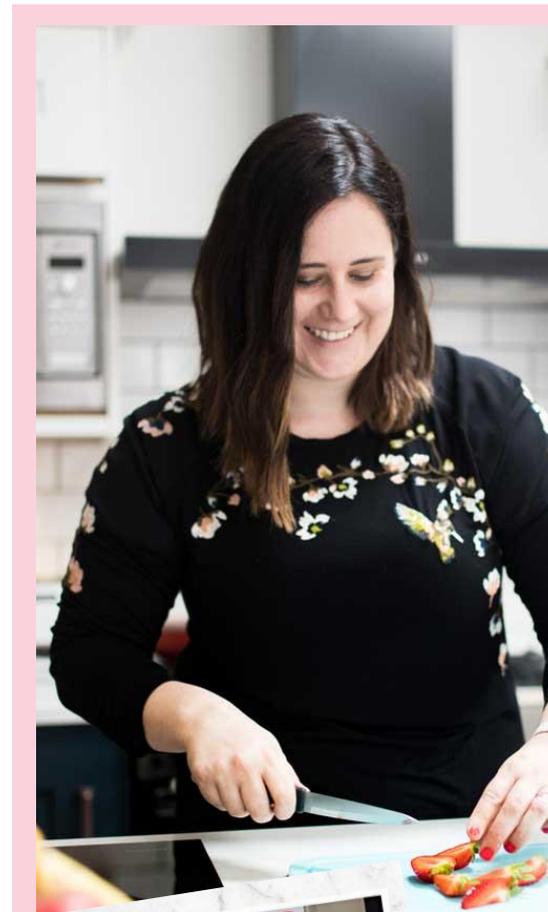
Inspired by her own fussy eater, Ciara Attwell set up www.myfussy eater.com in 2014. It has now become one of the UK's leading family food websites and Ciara has helped thousands of frustrated mums and dads introduce their reluctant eaters to mealtimes that are not only healthy but also fun. Ciara's recipes range from healthy breakfast options to school lunch boxes that will make your kids smile, adventurous evening meals that are quick and easy to prepare and lot of nutritious snack ideas too.

www.myfussy eater.com



Ciara's Top 5 Weaning Tips

- 1. First of all don't stress!** The first couple of months of weaning are supposed to be fun. It's all about exploring food and all its tastes and textures. Don't feel pressurised into following a set plan or routine. Make it enjoyable for you and your baby.
- 2. There's no wrong way to wean.** Whether you decide to start with purees or go straight into baby led weaning, there's no right or wrong way to do it. Your baby may have a natural preference either way and it's also ok to mix it up. I weaned both my children with a combination of purees and BLW.
- 3. Start with as many veggies as you can.** Naturally sweet fruits are sure to be an instant hit with your baby but introduce a wide variety of vegetables early so that their taste buds become adjusted to the flavours.
- 4. Make weaning a part of family meals from the beginning.** Babies will mimic your behaviour so if they see you eating then they are more likely to give it a go themselves. Pull their high chair up near you at the table and get them used to being part of family meal times from the start.
- 5. I am a big believer in cooking smartly to avoid making several different meals for the whole family.** Once you are through the initial exploratory stage of weaning, you can adapt your everyday cooking to make your meals baby-friendly. Use low sodium stock cubes and don't add sugar or honey to your recipes. You can always season your own food afterwards. Cooking just one meal for everyone will make weaning a lot easier and more enjoyable too!



Lucinda Miller

Lucinda Miller is the clinical lead and founder of NatureDoc, and runs a team of UK-wide nutritional therapists specialising in mother and child nutrition. She has been practising as a naturopath for 20 years, qualified in Functional Medicine and is author of the bestselling book *The Good Stuff*. She also runs NatureDoc. Shop online which stocks vitamins, probiotics and other food supplements suitable for pregnancy, breastfeeding, babies and toddlers. She is the mum of three and lives in Wiltshire.

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Lucinda's 5 top weaning tips

1. How much iron should my baby be consuming?

Iron is essential for a baby's immune system and brain development. A baby up to one year should be consuming around 11mg of iron a day. 100ml of baby formula contains about 1mg and breast milk contains almost none, so this is why weaning is a time to top up with dietary iron. Iron-rich foods include red meat, eggs, liver, green veg, lentils, chickpeas, black beans and kidney beans, so include these often when feeding your baby.

2. Should my baby be taking a vitamin D supplement?

The government recommend babies consume around 200iu of vitamin D daily to help with immunity, bone health and mood. If your baby is formula fed then they will be getting just about enough, but they may not be getting adequate amounts if breast fed, as vitamin D levels in breast milk can vary enormously. The NHS recommends that breast fed babies are topped up with a vitamin D supplement from October to March, due to the lack of sunshine during the winter months. Taking your baby out for a walk in the sunshine during the summer for 20 minutes or so can help the body make vitamin D. Eggs, oily fish like salmon, mackerel and sardines are good sources of vitamin D to keep levels nice and healthy.

3. What about Omega 3?

Omega 3 is a special type of fatty acid needed for baby's brain and central nervous system development, it also helps to develop good eye health. The best source is oily fish like salmon, mackerel and sardines and some eggs are boosted with omega 3. Vegetarian and vegan sources are from ground up walnuts, chia seeds, hemp seed and flax seeds (linseeds) but these are much harder for a baby to make into the brain boosting DHA form, so those who do not eat fish may need to seek out an vegetarian omega-3 rich food supplement to top up the diet.

4. Should I give my baby a probiotic?

Probiotic-rich foods such as Greek live yoghurt and kefir (easy to buy in the supermarket and can be found in the yoghurt or milk sections) and a wide variety of fruits and vegetables are excellent ways to help babies have a healthy gut and to develop a good immune system. These 'magical' gut microbes are also thought to help to reduce crying in babies, and are even the building blocks for the development of the hormones that help to promote a sunny disposition and a good memory which is important for learning. If your baby has been on antibiotics then it is wise to also give them a probiotic food supplement for 6 weeks following the course to replenish the stores of these healthy gut microbes.

5. Are there any extra vitamins and minerals I need to supplement if we are vegetarian or vegan?

The risk of nutrient deficiencies increases with any restricted diet, including vegetarian and vegan diets. Special attention needs to be given to intake of iron and vitamin D which I have covered above. Calcium, zinc, vitamin B12 and iodine are others nutrients you need to optimise. A baby under one is usually getting enough calcium from breast milk and other foods to encourage include oats, almond butter and ground chia seeds. The zinc can come from whole grains, tofu, beans, ground almonds and ground mixed seeds. Seaweed is a good source of iodine and you can add flakes of this to baby food. B12 is harder to get through diet, so you will have to top up with a baby vitamin B12 food supplement.

Lizzie King

Having worked in film with a huge passion for food before children, I became a mother for the first time, 12 years ago and felt the options were not out there to include babies and children in the fun, flavour and fabulous nutritional opportunities that food can provide. I did a nutrition course and a Leith's course, created my blog and set about making up my own recipes to make eating as a family fun, full of goodness and always delicious. This led to my book being published last year, and I am lucky now to be able to work in the food industry to create recipes, do talks, demos and workshops to keep food healthy and delicious and everyone as well as they can be.

www.lizzieloveshealthy.com

[@lizzieloveshealthy](https://www.instagram.com/lizzieloveshealthy)

www.lizzieloveshealthy.com

www.facebook.com/lizzieloveshealthy/

Lizzie's Top 5 Weaning Tips

1. ONE SIZE FITS ALL Make your meals for everyone in the family the same and avoid the mega stress of the multi meal scene I've seen often. I wrote my book to combat exactly this problem and it is full of recipes that everyone can and will enjoy – weaning babies and fussy Dads included! No one needs to make “kids' food”, “baby food” and then “grown up food” in the same day. The easiest way to send anyone round the bend!

2. PLAN UP If you can make a meal plan this is the BEST way of cutting stress by miles, even if it's just for a few nights of the week, it'll set you up and avoid the last-minute hangry tantrums that my kids are pretty good at!

3. BATCH IT With your lovely meal plan in hand, you can make a big pot of soup, stew, pasta sauce etc and freeze into family/kids portion sizes to make one cook up last way longer.

4. ICE IT UP When I started weaning my first baby, I fell in love with the ice cube tray and I've never looked back. I have stashes of things frozen in ice cube size lumps. Obviously, all the batches of weaning foods work in individual portions, but don't stop there. Try freezing and then bagging up the following:

Chicken stock to add to any sauce to give it a kick

Milk to add in to hot porridge to cool it down, when you've been on holiday and have no milk left

Berries and mint leaves in water, make a super cool addition to a glass of water!

5. STAY COOL So much easier said than done I know! But when you're sweating over another pot of steamed squash, and the carrots are being flung on the floor take a deep breath, step away, turn up the music, and remember this: You are introducing another human being to the wonders of food! It's an enormous privilege that will set them up for life, and you are doing a brilliant job. Food is, above all, a joy and pleasure and they will thank you and think of you for everything you made them.



Banana Oat Pancakes

By **Natasha Corrett** @natashacorrett

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Makes 6 pancakes

1 banana 100g

1 egg

30g (½ cup) Oats



Put the oats into the blender and blend until a fine flour texture. Add the egg and banana and blend until smooth.

Heat a pan with some olive oil or butter and put 1 tbsp of batter into the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes until golden then flip and cook on the other side.

Repeat until the mixture is finished.

Serve with yogurt and chopped banana



Baby Porridge

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 3 minutes

Serves 1 weaning portion

30g oats blended
2 tbsp fruit puree
1 tsp nut butter
1 cup milk
Pinch cinnamon
1 tsp chia seeds



Blend the oats until they are a fine flour texture.

Pour the blended oats into a pan with the chia seeds, milk, cinnamon, milk and fruit puree.

Cook on a medium to low heat - once it starts to become a porridge consistency add the nut butter and stir.

Serve warm.



Leftover Porridge Bites

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Makes 6 bars

200g leftover cooked porridge

70g dates

¼ cup water

70g oats



Blend the dates with the water to make a paste then mix it through your leftover porridge with the oats.

Put the mixture into a pre-lined loaf tin making it about an inch deep.

Bake for 15 minute and leave to cool. Cut into bars and keep in an airtight container for up to 4-5 days.



Soft Butternut Squash Cinnamon Muffins

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Makes 8 (freezable)

**220g steamed butternut squash
(or 1 small sweet potato)
100g spelt flour
60g coconut oil or butter
2 eggs
1 tsp cinnamon**

Top Tip: Add 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda. This will give them more rise. However when Rudy was little I decided that the consistency without it was softer and easier to eat with no teeth!



Preheat oven to 180 deg fan

Steam the butternut squash.

Melt the coconut oil or butter.

Put the butternut squash, coconut oil, eggs, flour and cinnamon into a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.

Put into muffin cases and into the oven for 20 minutes.

Leave to cool and let the little ones feed themselves.



Green Egg Bites

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Serves 4 weaning portions

4 Eggs

¼ cup Frozen peas

¼ Courgette, grated

20g Feta

Handful Spinach, Frozen or fresh

2 Chestnut mushrooms, diced

1 tsp Olive oil

Serve with: Sweet potato wedges and hummus

Top tip: TAdd any veg into the egg mixture like red peppers, kale, spinach roasted butternut squash for a different flavour and texture.



Crack the eggs and beat into a bowl.

In a frying pan add the olive oil, mushrooms, spinach, courgette and peas and cook for 3-4 minutes until everything is wilted

Add cooked ingredients into the bowl with the eggs and crumble the feta in and mix together

Pour into a cupcake silicone tray. Fill to just below the top.

Put into the oven for 15 minutes until hard and no egg mixture comes out when you push the top.

Serve immediately or pop into the fridge for later.



Green Patties

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves 2 weaning portions

Handful of Spinach
2 florets of Broccoli
Half a handful of Fresh Coriander (optional)
1 Egg
2 tbsp Pesto (or grated cheese)
4 heaped tbsp Flour of choice
2 tbsp Olive oil
¼ cup veg stock / bone broth or water



Very finely chop the broccoli and spinach.

Add 1 tbsp olive oil to a good non stick frying pan and add the spinach and broccoli with the water or stock and sauté for 2 minutes until the broccoli is soft.

Take off the heat and put into a blender. Add the egg, flour, coriander and pesto and blend until a thick smooth texture.

Using the same pan add 1 tbsp olive oil and heat on a medium heat. Spoon in one tablespoon at a time of the mixture (this will make 6-7 patties) and cook for approximately 2 minutes on each side until golden brown. Repeat until you use all the mixture up.

Serve with some sweet potato wedges and hummus for one of Rudy's favourite meals!



Sweet Potato Gnocchi

By **Natasha Corrett** @natashacorrett

Prep time: 50 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves 2 weaning portions

195g pre-roasted sweet potato (250g uncooked)
35g gluten free flour (doves)
5g corn flour

Top tip: Freeze them on a baking tray before cooking them for a quick and simple dinner just put in boiling water from frozen for 4 minutes

Serve with: Pea and Kale pesto on P. 19



Preheat oven 180 deg fan

Put the potatoes whole into a preheated oven and bake for 50 minutes and leave to cool. You can then just peel the the skin off or if you don't have time peel and chop the sweet potato. In a saucepan, heat 2 inches of water, place the chopped sweet potato in a sieve into the pan and place the lid on top. Steam for 20-25 minutes until they are soft (DO NOT BOIL as the potato will get too wet and won't work)

Mash the sweet potato with the back of a spoon into a bowl. Add the gluten free flour and corn flour into the bowl & mix well.

Cover a surface with flour and with two small teaspoons, shape the mixture into small balls and drop onto the floured surface (you don't have to be too neat). It is a wet mixture not like a normal gnocchi that you roll.

Sprinkle with a little more flour and gently rock each one backwards and forwards (as if you were rolling it) just so the flour sits on the surface of the sweet potato. Press the back of a fork gently onto each one, this will help the sauce to stick to the gnocchi.

Boil a very large pan of water, drop each gnocchi into the pan and cook the gnocchi for 3 minutes.

Take out of the water and into a bowl with some olive oil. Serve with any sauce or pesto.



Fish fingers and mash

By **Natasha Corrett** @natashacorrett

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Serves 4 weaning portions (or a family of 3)

2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1cm cubes
1 tbsp tahini
1 tsp olive oil, plus more for frying
2 white fish fillets, skinned
Ground almonds, for rolling (or polenta to make them more crispy)
100g peas
1 tsp butter or coconut oil

Batter

1 egg
2 tbsp plain flour
zest of ½ lemon



Steam or boil the sweet potato until soft. Mash with the back of a fork and mix in the tahini, and olive oil. Put to one side.

Make the batter by mixing together the egg, flour, lemon zest. Whisk until combined and there are no lumps.

Cut the fish into 1cm wide and 2 inch long fingers. Dip into the batter and coat well, then roll in the ground almonds and put to one side on a plate or on some baking paper.

Heat a frying pan with oil and bring to a medium heat. Put the fish fingers into the pan and cook until golden on each side.

Boil a kettle and pour the water over the frozen peas to heat them up. Drain and mix through the butter.. Serve with the mash and fish fingers



Spinach pancake and hummus rolls

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Makes 4 pancakes (1-2 per weaning portions)

1 handful of spinach

1 egg

⅓ cup milk (80mls)

6 tbsp flour (60g)

1 tbsp olive oil for cooking

Hummus

Serve with: Sweet potato wedges and corn on the cob

Family friendly: For older kids fill with roasted veggies, roasted chicken and make as a wrap for a lunchbox.

As a Sweet Treat: Wrap the pancake around a banana and drizzle with maple syrup and cut into slices.



Put the raw spinach, egg, milk and flour into a blender and blend until velvety smooth.

In a non-stick pan heat half of the olive oil and spoon in 1 ladle of mixture. Make sure you spread it nice and thin to all edges of the pan tipping it as you go to help it spread. Leave to cook for 2 minutes or until golden and flip and cook on the other side.

Use more oil as needed and repeat until mixture is complete. This makes 4 pancakes. Leave to cool then spread hummus over each pancake (like you would spread tomato sauce over a pizza) and then roll them up. Cut into rings for them to have a go at feeding themselves.



Kale & Pea Pesto Pasta

By **Natasha Corrett** @natashacorrett

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves 3 weaning portions

1 large handful of kale
¾ cup of frozen peas
2 tbsp cashew butter (or almond)
1 tsp olive oil
Little squeeze of lemon
Pasta

Optional extras: chicken, fish or cheese mix with pasta or any grain.



Chop the kale and steam with the frozen peas.

Put into a blender with the cashew butter, olive oil, squeeze of lemon (not too much) and blend until smooth.

Serve through pasta or any grain. You can warm it up with some cooked rice to make a delicious green risotto.



Beetroot pinwheels

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Serves 3 weaning portions

100g boiled beetroot
1/2 small red pepper (50g)
70g cheese or pre-cooked lentils
1 handful spinach
1 sheet of ready rolled puff pastry
1 egg

Serve with: Peas and steamed broccoli

Family friendly: Double the recipe and use the sauce to make into a pasta sauce or as a pizza base.



Preheat oven to 180 deg fan

Put the beetroot, raw red pepper, grated cheese and spinach into a blender and blend until smooth.

Beat the egg to use as an egg wash.

Layout the puff pastry on some parchment paper and spread the mixture over the top leaving a 1cm edge.

Starting on one of the long sides roll the pastry - when it gets to the end brush the egg wash down the side to help it stick when in the oven. Make sure 'seam' is underneath the roll.

Take a very sharp knife and cut the roll into equal slices, laying them flat a baking tray with 1 inch between each one.

Brush each pinwheel lightly with beaten egg. Bake for 25 minutes until puffed and golden.

Leave to cool and serve.



One Pot Polenta and Salmon

By **Natasha Corrett** @natashacorrett

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves 2-3 weaning portions

40g course polenta
1 salmon filet
¼ tsp ground cumin
1 handful spinach
1 tbsp cream cheese (optional)
1 tsp bouillon powder
½ cup frozen peas 30g
1.5 cups milk of choice



De-skin the salmon filet and cut into 1 inch chunks

Dice the spinach.

Pour the polenta into the pan with the cumin, bouillon powder, salmon and milk and bring to a medium temperature.

The trick with polenta is to keep stirring so it doesn't go lumpy. Once it starts to bubble and spit turn the temperature right down to a very low simmer.

Add the peas, spinach and cream cheese and stir in.

Once the salmon is cooked it will start to flake you can take the polenta off the heat.

If you want to eat it later you must keep it on a hot plate or in a warm oven and put cling film directly over the top of the polenta to act like a skin to stop it going solid.

If you want to have it for leftovers pour into a tupperware and put into the fridge then it will go solid and can have it as a handheld cold meal or snack..



Lentil Veggie Sauce

By **Natasha Corrett** @natashacorrett

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Serves 4 weaning portions

150g red split lentils
1 tbsp olive oil
1 clove garlic
1 tsp ground cumin
1 bay leaf
1 tin tomatoes 400g
400ml water
1 small carrot
½ courgette
½ aubergine
1 red pepper
1 handful of spinach

Serve with: Pasta, baked potato, rice, quinoa or couscous.

Top tip: Batch cook this and freeze or use for a delicious veggie lasagne base. A simple white sauce recipe is on www.mumsknowbest.com



Grate the garlic, dice the courgette, carrot aubergine and red peppers.

In a heavy bottomed pan that has a lid add the olive oil, cumin, bay leaf grated garlic and saute for 1-2 minutes.

Add the courgettes, carrots, aubergine and red peppers and coat in the spices. Add the tin of tomatoes, water and lentils and stir.

Put the lid on and bring to the boil, stirring regularly. After 5 minutes take the lid off and bring to a simmer and leave to cook for 20 minutes stirring at intervals so that the bottom doesn't burn.

Stir through the spinach until wilted.

Take off the heat and either serve by itself or blend smooth as a puree to serve over pasta, grains or baked potatoes.



Berry Lollies

By Natasha Corrett @natashacorrett

Prep time: 2 minutes

Freezing time: 6+ hours

Makes 8 lollies

150g Berries
1 cup Yogurt



Top Tip: Try freezing other smoothies like a green smoothie for extra veg or any vegetable juices

Put all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth.

Pour into ice-lolly moulds then enjoy when frozen!



Broccoli & Carrot Frittata Bars

By Ciara Atwell @myfussy eater

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Serves 9 weaning portions

200g broccoli florets

1 large carrot

½ tbsp oil

6 medium eggs

75g grated Red Leicester cheese

1.5 tbsp plain flour

½ tsp dried oregano



Preheat the oven to 180c and line a dish with baking paper (I used a 24cm sq dish).

Chop the broccoli into very small pieces and finely grate the carrot.

Heat the oil in a frying pan and then add the broccoli. Cook for 2 minutes until it is starting to soften, stirring regularly. Add the grated carrot and cook for another minute. Remove the veggies from the heat and then add them to the prepared dish.

In a large jug crack in the eggs and whisk with a fork.

Add in the grated cheese, flour and oregano and mix again until smooth.

Pour the egg mixture over the vegetables and then bake in the oven for 17 minutes until the frittata is firm to touch.

Allow to cool for 5-10 minutes in the dish before cutting into 9 squares.



Creamy Blueberry Smoothie

By Lucinda Miller @naturedockids

Prep time: 5 minutes

Makes 2-3 weaning portions.

- 1 handful fresh or frozen blueberries**
- 3 pitted prunes**
- 1 teaspoon linseeds/flax seeds**
- 3 tablespoons kefir of thick plain Greek yoghurt**

Allergen Swaps: Dairy Free: Use Almond, Cashew or Coconut Yoghurt

Certain foods contain special “magical microbes” which can help to support a baby’s gut health and immunity. These include plain live yoghurt and its cousin kefir (which can now easily be bought in most supermarkets). This winning combination of blueberries, prunes, linseeds and yoghurt /kefir is absolutely delicious, and has been my go-to combination for babies and toddlers with low immunity and sluggish bowels - especially if they have just been on antibiotics. Suitable from 6 months.



Combine all the ingredients and blend to make a thick puree/smoothie.

Either serve immediately or keep in the fridge for 3-4 days.

Can also be frozen and made into mini ice-lollies for toddlers.



Carrot Cake Porridge

By Lucinda Miller @naturedockids

Prep time: 3 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Makes 2-3 baby portions

¼ cup fine porridge oats
½ small carrot finely grated
½ small apple finely grated
1 cup milk of choice or milk formula
1 teaspoon ground sunflower and pumpkin seeds
Pinch ground cinnamon
Pinch ground nutmeg

*Allergen Swaps: Dairy free: Swap to oat milk |
Gluten free: Buy gluten free oats*

This is a yummy breakfast recipe that is a hit with all ages from weaning babies up to teenagers. A brilliant way to add in two of your child's 'five-a-day' at breakfast time to nutritious oats full of calcium and beta glucans for immunity. The ground seeds add some healthy fats and vitamin E to this delicious breakfast, and the cinnamon and apple helps to sweeten this porridge naturally. Suitable from 6 months.



Place all the ingredients into a small saucepan and cook on a medium heat for few minutes until the liquid is absorbed and it becomes a soft porridge consistency. Stir with a spoon or silicone spatula a few times whilst cooking.

Can be stored in the fridge for a couple of days and reheated when needed adding in a little extra milk to soften.

N.B. Pre-grind the seeds in a coffee grinder or Nutribullet and store in a glass jar in the fridge. You can also buy ground mixed seeds in the wholefood section of most supermarkets.



Raspberry Banana Pancakes

By Lucinda Miller @naturedockids

Prep time: 2 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

Makes 6-8 mini pancakes

1 egg
1/4 cup ground almonds
1/2 ripe banana
6-8 fresh or frozen raspberries

Allergen Swaps:

Egg-free: Swap the egg for 1 heaped teaspoon of gram flour and 3 teaspoons water

Nut free: Swap the ground almonds for a tablespoon of light tahini (sesame paste)

Naturally sweet and yummy, these little cuties are a brilliant healthy finger food that babies and toddlers love. A gorgeous soft pancake suitable from the time when babies can feed themselves, even if your baby does not have many teeth! The ground almonds and eggs provide lots of healthy calcium, vitamin D, vitamin B12 and iron. Suitable from 6-7 months.



Mash the banana with a fork and mix it in with the rest of the ingredients into a batter.

Heat a nonstick frying pan and place a heaped teaspoon of mixture in mini pancake shapes. Fry for 1-2 mins on each side until golden brown.

These can be kept in the fridge for a couple of days or kept in the freezer in a small bag for up to 3 months.



Florentine Fish Cakes

By Lizzie King @lizzieloveshealthy

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Serves: 8 weaning portions

300g Wild Salmon
250g Cod
250g Haddock
1 Leek
700g Potatoes
200g Spinach
300ml Milk of choice
1 Lemon
Few sprigs Flat leaf parsley
1 Egg
75g Butter or Coconut Oil



A lovely way of introducing fish to those who are not keen on using a spoon, with the added iron of spinach that is bound up in the tasty cake and therefore less likely to cause consternation. A freezer friendly number that all ages can eat and perfect for travelling too. We make these on repeat and are often a frozen saviour when we come home from holidays or weekends away.



Place all fish in a large pan with milk, a sprig of parsley, 8 peppercorns, and the zest of the lemon peeled off into curls with a potato peeler. On a low heat bring to a simmer and cover partially. Simmer for 10 minutes until all fish is firm and opaque. Drain milk and seasoning and set aside.

Chop potatoes in half or more if very large and bring to the boil in a large pan of salted water. Test after 10-15 minutes with a fork and if they give easily, remove from heat and drain well. Combine with butter and salt and pepper and mash until smooth. Use a little of the poaching milk if needed, mash should be firm not runny.

Flake fish into mash pan and stir to combine. Finely slice spinach into ribbons with remaining parsley and add.

Whisk egg in a bowl and combine with mixture.

Form into small balls and flatten. Cover and leave in fridge until needed.

Either bake in the oven at 180 for 15 minutes, turning halfway. Or fry in pan, turning after a few minutes.

Freeze remaining cakes in ziplock bags, for up to 3 months. They're great to whip out and cook from frozen when in a rush.

Lime and Coriander Hummus

By Lizzie King @lizzieloveshealthy

Prep time: 10 minutes

Serves: 5-6 weaning portions

2 cans drained chickpeas
3 tbsp Tahini paste
1 tsp ground coriander
2 garlic cloves
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 lime zest and juice
Large sprig fresh coriander roughly chopped
¼ cup Olive oil



Place all ingredients except the coriander and oil in the processor bowl and pulse until smooth. Drizzle oil in whilst blades running.

Continue with water until smooth, paste like consistency. Add salt and pepper and coriander and blitz till green!



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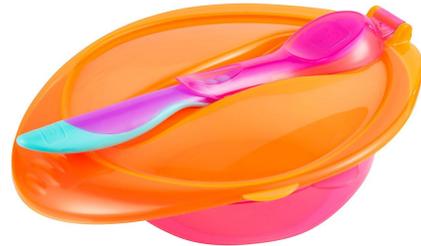
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