

Problems with lumps

Information for parents

Some children find accepting lumps difficult. They may gag, retch, or vomit when lumps are offered. Try not to worry as this happens to quite a lot of children.

Do not try and force your child to accept lumps.

Try the following steps to encourage your child onto lumpier foods. Mealtimes should be fun and enjoyable for both you and your child. Recognise and respect your child's signals. If their mouth is open for another spoonful they are telling you to try again.

Some babies progress onto finger food before coping with lumpy or stage 2 foods. When your baby is reaching out for finger food, try offering **bite and dissolve foods** first. This will mean that they are less likely to choke on this texture if a small bit breaks off in their mouth.

Guidance

- Wait for your baby to open their mouth and do not overload the spoon
- In the early stages your baby may bite and spit out the food. This is normal!
- Avoid giving your baby lumps in a thin liquid, for example, meat in thin baby gravy. Instead, try lumps with a similar background texture e.g. minced meat in baby gravy thickened with mashed potato.
- Try a very small serving of the new or lumpy food at the start of the meal so if baby is sick only a mouthful comes up. Start with a mouthful or two at each meal, slowly introducing the new texture when they are hungry and more willing to try.
- Try serving the new food alongside a preferred food, offering alternate mouthfuls. This can be really helpful for babies who spit as they generally won't spit out their favourite food.
- Sweet lumpy foods can often be more motivating to get started and the fruit lumps can often be softer. Try lumpy puddings first if savoury foods are not being accepted as readily.
- If your child prefers lumpy jar food but rejects your cooking, don't lose heart. Often the lumps in jar foods are softer so try cooking pasta or vegetables for longer to help your baby get used to the texture and taste.
- If your child can eat home cooked puree but is struggling with lumps, gradually reduce the amount of time you blend the food to get to the lumpier texture.
- Try adding very small lumps into puree or smooth foods, such as crunched up Rice Krispies or couscous. Slowly add very small amounts to gradually build up the baby's acceptance of texture
- Have a drink to hand if they need to clear their mouth between mouthfuls.

Move slowly from foods that bite and chew easily to foods that require more chewing

| Bite and dissolve * | |
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| Savoury Prawn crackers (usually dairy & soya free; contains egg) Kiddylicious veggie straws® Skips® Pom-bear original crisps ® Organix carrot and herb stix® | Sweet Ice cream wafers (contain milk, soya, egg & wheat) Meringues (contains egg) Rice paper Sponge cakes (can be made milk, soya & wheat free) Sponge finger (boudoir biscuits), usually dairy and soya free; contains egg & wheat Kiddylicious banana wafers |
| Bite and chew easily | |
| Savoury Ripe peeled avocado Soft cooked potato Soft cooked carrot Soft cooked parsnips Soft cooked swede Crumbly cheeses (dairy/soya free if on a 'free from diet') Filleted cooked fish Cooked pasta | Sweet Ripe peeled pear (canned or fresh) Ripe peeled nectarines Cooked peeled apple (chunks) |
| Soft 'lumpy' textures | |
| Savoury Baked beans Scrambled egg Porridge Cereal with milk (or milk substitute) Fork-mashed vegetables with baby gravy | Sweet Rice puddings (can be homemade with pudding rice and a milk substitute) Stewed fruit |
| Bite and stay firm | |
| Savoury Dried meat Dried fish (oriental stores) | Sweet Dried banana (not brittle chips) Dried peaches Dried pears Dried apricots Dehydrated fruit strips (health food shops) Bikkiepegs® contains wheat Liquorice sticks |

** The bite and dissolve foods are not normally encouraged in a child's diet. However in children with feeding difficulties they are recommended in small quantities to help develop chewing skills and tolerance of texture.*