

Peanut Allergies – The Latest Guidelines

Some children have a higher risk of developing a peanut allergy than others. Babies who have severe eczema and/or and egg allergy are at the highest risk. In the past, the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) advised that those children avoid peanuts until they were older. Newest research has shown that early introduction of peanut products in those kids actually could help prevent an allergy.

What does that mean?

Babies who are at a high risk of peanuts allergy (severe eczema or egg allergy) should be tested for peanut allergy at around 4 months old. We can refer you to a pediatric allergist to facilitate this. If the tests are negative, introducing small amounts of peanut products at least 3 times a week can help prevent an allergy from developing. If the allergy tests are positive the allergist can help your family decide the best course of action. Sometimes if the test is only slightly positive the first taste of peanut butter might be in the allergist's office.

What about other babies?

Babies who have mild or moderate eczema (your provider can help you determine this) are at a slight increase risk of peanut allergy. No testing needs to be done, but starting peanut products at 6 months is helpful to prevent an allergy.

If food allergies run in the family talk with your provider about if testing needs to be done on your baby before trying peanut products.

For babies who aren't at risk of peanut allergy you can start peanut products whenever your family is ready but early is fine!

What kind of "peanut products?"

Peanuts themselves are a choking hazard so you can either give a small taste of smooth peanut butter or mix some smooth peanut butter in with another puree your baby has tolerated before like plain yogurt, infant cereal or a fruit or vegetable. There is also a puffed peanut snack for babies called "Bamba" that is common overseas and now available in the US.

For more information:

[https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/allergies-](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/allergies-asthma/Pages/Peanut-Allergies-What-You-Should-Know-About-the-Latest-Research.aspx)

[asthma/Pages/Peanut-Allergies-What-You-Should-Know-About-the-Latest-Research.aspx](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/allergies-asthma/Pages/Peanut-Allergies-What-You-Should-Know-About-the-Latest-Research.aspx)

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/tips-tools/ask-the-pediatrician/Pages/When-can-I-start-giving-my-baby-peanut-butter.aspx>