

WHY?

- **You decide what goes in the food** – Choose fresh, frozen, or local ingredients.
- **Nutrition** – Homemade is as good as or better than infant food in a jar.
- **Save Money** – you can save up to 70% by making your own infant food.
- **Convenience** – requires only a blender/food processor, ice cube tray, and a freezer.
- **Tastes great** – Infants will love it!



How?

4 Basic Steps

1. **START:** with fresh or frozen whole fruits and vegetables (F/V) or meat/meat alternate (M/MA)

- **FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:**

- Fresh – wash, chop, and peel.
- Frozen – simply open the package or cook in bag if directed.
- Do not use frozen F/V that contain added sugars or sauce.



- **MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATE:**

- Remove fat, gristle, skin, and bones before cooking.
- Be sure to cook to proper temperature.



2. **COOK:** in the oven, microwave, slow cooker, or use the stovetop to boil or steam.

- F/V is done when it can be pierced or mashed easily with a fork.
- M/MA is done when cooked to appropriate temperature.



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3. FOOD PROCESSOR, IMMERSION BLENDER OR STAND BLENDER:

- Puree the F/V to a soft-velvety texture.
- If needed for texture – add a small amount of the cooking water.
- Cut cooked meat into small pieces while still warm – to ease pureeing.



4. STORAGE/SERVING: Serve immediately or place in refrigerator for no more than 2 days (except: meats, poultry, fish, and egg yolks should be used within 24 hours).

- Or freeze: place in clean and appropriately sanitized ice cube trays.

- Place trays in a sealed container or a freezer safe plastic food storage bag.

- Always Date and Label!

- Place into the freezer – once frozen – F/V or M/MA can be popped out of the tray and placed in freezer safe storage in order to use the ice cube trays to make more infant food.

- Can be stored in the freezer safely for up to 1 month.

- Each cube should equate to approximately 1 ounce (2 Tbsp) of the F/V or M/MA.

- Thoroughly reheat refrigerated or frozen infant food to 165° F. Stir thoroughly and test the temperature before serving it to the infant.

- Defrost frozen foods in the refrigerator, used thawed foods within 48 hours.



DOS AND DON'TS OF MAKING INFANT FOOD

Do

- Practice appropriate food safety:
 - Appropriate sanitation and hand washing
 - Avoid cross-contamination
- Discard any uneaten leftover food in the infant's dish/serving dish.
- Determine appropriate textures per the infant's age and development.

Don't

- Do not add more than one creditable component to your homemade infant food (separate components could be combined at the time the infant food is to be served).
- Do not add salt or other seasonings, sugar or other sweeteners, fats, or gravy.
 - Never use honey: it should not be served to infants due to the risk of infant botulism.
- Do not refreeze infant food that has been removed from the freezer and allowed to thaw in the refrigerator.
- Do not provide solid foods to infants until the parent has requested that you offer them to their infant while in your care. The decision to feed specific foods should be made by the parent and primary care physician.