

OPTIMUM NUTRITION FOR RAISING A CHILD ON A VEGAN DIET CHECKLIST: AGE 6 MONTHS TO 12 MONTHS

Evidence-based advice from Amanda Benham, vegan paediatric dietitian with over 25 years experience

AGE 6-8 MONTHS:

*Continue with breastfeeding (or formula), and if breastfeeding, mother to continue to supplement with Prenatal multivitamin supplement, additional vitamin B12, DHA and vitamin D and iron if required. Also, mother to continue to use iodised salt and to consume 500 ml+ of calcium-fortified plant milk daily (or consider calcium supplement).



*Include iron-rich foods in your baby's daily diet, such as iron-fortified baby cereal, tofu, tempeh, well-cooked red lentils and green vegetables.

*Offer a variety of foods from each of the following groups and aim to start including foods from each of these food groups every day: Grains (e.g. baby cereal, baby pasta, rice), Legumes & Soy Products (e.g. tofu, tempeh, red lentils, brown lentils, mashed chick peas, mashed beans), Green Vegetables (e.g. zucchini, broccoli, spinach, green peas, green beans), Other Colourful Vegetables (e.g. carrot, pumpkin, sweet potato), Fruit (eg mashed banana, berries, mango, pawpaw, kiwifruit, citrus etc). Give one teaspoon flaxseed oil daily.

* Offer nut pastes and tahini, one at a time, a few days apart. Also offer wheat (such as a wheat-based baby cereal). If no reaction, keep these each one in your baby's diet for at least the next few weeks / months. (Introduce these foods even if there is a family history of allergies.²)

*Get into a routine with one meal first, then another, then another. Include baby in family meal times (safely seated in a high chair) and encourage baby to learn to use a spoon as well as to eat some suitable finger foods.

*Continue supplementing baby daily with vitamin B12 (5+ mcg), vitamin D (400 IU) and DHA (100 mg)¹.

AGE 8-12 MONTHS:

*Continue to offer new foods from each of the plant food groups. Also include some high fat foods daily, such as tahini, peanut butter, other nut butters or avocado.



*From about 8-9 months of age, offer food BEFORE breastmilk, so that food intake increases.

*Introduce water in a baby cup (not a bottle) between meals, so that baby can start to learn to drink from a cup.

*Start introducing small amounts of a full fat calcium-fortified soymilk – eg on breakfast.

*Establish a routine of offering 3 meals per day at regular times, ideally with family meals. Include iron-rich foods at every meal (e.g. iron-fortified foods, tofu, tempeh, other soy products, lentils, chick peas, beans), plus a source of vitamin C -to enhance iron absorption. (e.g. include fruit with breakfast, and sprinkle lemon or lime juice over other meals, or garnish with finely chopped tomato or capsicum).

*Suggested meal pattern to work towards (which is also suitable for family meals): Breakfast: Cereal + fruit + fortified soymilk; Lunch: Grain (or potato) + legume/ tofu/tempeh + green vegetable + other colourful vegetable + vitamin C source + high fat food (tahini, nut butter or avocado). Dinner: Same pattern as lunch. (Give breastmilk or formula between meals or after meals.)

*Continue supplementing baby with vitamin B12 (5 mcg), vitamin D (400IU) and DHA (100 mg), and giving one teaspoon flaxseed oil daily¹.

KEY REFERENCES: 1.

Baroni L, Goggi S, Battaglini R, Berveglieri M, Fasan I, Filippin D, et al. Vegan Nutrition for Mothers and Children: Practical Tools for Healthcare Providers. *Nutrients*. 2018;11(1):5. <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/11/1/5/htm> , accessed 1/1/19.

2.

Netting et al. An Australian Consensus on Infant Feeding Guidelines to Prevent Food Allergy: Outcomes from the Australian Infant Feeding Summit. *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice* 2017; 5 (6)

This information is not intended to replace individualised dietary or medical advice. If you want help with nutrition and dietary planning, see an Accredited Practising Dietitian experienced in plant-based nutrition. If you have health issues or concerns, see your doctor. © 2019 Amanda Benham, APD, AN, FASLM www.humanherbivore.com