

## How to manage lumpy foods

Some children do find it difficult to get used to eating lumpy foods.

What you may notice:

- > Your child may spit out lumpy food or become upset during feeding them these foods.
- > They may be gagging when being offered new or lumpy food this is not uncommon
- > Your infant may become fussier about what foods they will eat and they may prefer smooth foods. Most children go through a fussy phase. During this time it is important to offer a wide range of foods and they will usually begin eating them again.

Advice to help:

- > Make sure your baby can sit unsupported, or has the appropriate seating equipment if needed.
- > Preferably sit your baby in a highchair with a foot rest. It is best that you baby eats in an upright position supporting their head, back and neck. Make sure your baby is not tired or unwell or you are rushed when trying new foods. Patience is key as it will take them some time to get to know new foods
- > Make sure you have good eye contact with your baby and that they are aware that food is being offered.
- > Have the same routine prior to each meal. For example, washing hands, sitting in highchair, putting on bib, placing mat then bowl or plate with food.
- > Make it fun! Try not to worry if gagging occurs as this is normal while they are learning new sensation.
- > Try giving only a small amount of the lumpy food to begin with, try increasing this with every meal when they are more hungry and open to trying foods
- > Giving the new food alongside a favourite food often helps if in alternating spoonful's as they will be less likely to spit it out
- > Lumpy foods such as soft fruit and vegetable lumps are often well accepted.
- > If home cooked puree is accepted, then over time slowly increase the texture to thick puree then mashed, increasing the lumps in the food.
- > Adding couscous or crushed up cereal to pureed food can build up the baby's acceptance to texture
- > If baby opens their mouth for more try again!
- > All babies are different so keep it up and persevere!
- > New foods need to be offered several times until they are accepted often at least 15 times or more.