



# How to Incorporate Early Introduction of Peanuts into Your Office Workflow

Preventing peanut allergy may be as easy as introducing it into baby's diet before their first birthday. The LEAP study showed that babies who ate peanut foods starting as early as 4-6 months of age reduced their risk of developing peanut allergy by up to 86%<sup>1</sup>.

Additionally, the National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Disease (NIAID) issued guidelines in 2017 for early introduction of peanut foods and the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) states, "Introducing peanut-containing foods in the first year reduces the risk that an infant will develop a food allergy to peanuts."<sup>2, 3</sup>



We know early introduction can help prevent peanut allergies. But adding that discussion with new parents to the many other critical priorities can be a challenge. Pediatrician **Dr. JJ Levenstein** offers these tips and techniques for you and your practice.

## Train Your Office Staff

- Inform your staff about the LEAP study, NIAID and new DGA guidelines
- Emphasize this information is new/updated and the standard of advice, moving forward
- Answer your staff's questions and address misperceptions
- Throw in a quiz at the end—those passing get a gift card
- Posters and handouts in your waiting room are valuable before patients are seen



## Assess Allergy Risk at the Prenatal Interview

- Obtaining a family history, that includes atopic disease, can prompt you to flag the baby's chart
- Encourage mom to eat a wide variety of foods during her pregnancy and post-partum
- If there are food allergies in the family, reassure them there are new ways to possibly prevent them



## Take Care of Baby's Skin

- Whether atopic or xerotic, broken skin presents an opportunity to sensitize baby to allergens
- Broken skin = increased food allergy risk
- Take an early and aggressive stance—use emollients frequently, treat inflammation rapidly



## 2 Month Visit: Inform EARLY

- Provide handout at 2 month visit about complementary feeding
- Discourage any solid foods before the 4 month visit
- Reassess if food allergies in any first-degree relative—peanut/egg allergies in particular
- Assess if any family food insecurity—generate WIC referral if needed

- Review family's diet culture—vegetarian, vegan, omnivore, etc
- Briefly review the solid science behind early introduction
- Inform that when baby is ready, peanut foods and eggs can be safely incorporated into an infant's diet, early and often (e.g., thinned peanut butter, fully cooked chopped egg)
- Emphasize benefit of incorporating all foods in the first year, except honey—specifically, potential lowering of food allergy risk, and building a more diverse diet

## 4 Month Visit: Be PROACTIVE

- Solicit questions/concerns about solid foods
- Touch on LEAP and EAT studies—advantages of including peanut foods & egg in diet.<sup>1, 4</sup>
- Inform what an allergic reaction looks like and what to do while reinforcing that infants have a low risk of severe allergic reactions to food<sup>5</sup>
- Emphasize giving a few standard complementary foods first before adding in allergens
- Provide handout on how to safely incorporate peanut foods into baby's diet
- Refer parents to [PreventPeanutAllergies.org](http://PreventPeanutAllergies.org) for more information

## 6 Month Visit: Get STARTED

- Reassess how baby is doing with diet/growth/development
- Ask parents about any food reactions, if any
- Reemphasize how to feed peanut foods safely

## 9 Month Visit: REASSESS & REINFORCE

For more information, including research, CME webinars, videos and more, visit

[PreventPeanutAllergies.org](http://PreventPeanutAllergies.org)

[Click here to sign up](#) for free office resources and baby-friendly peanut products.

Visit the National Peanut Board booth at the conference to learn more and enter our giveaway!

### References

- <sup>1</sup> Du Toit, et al. Randomized Trial of Peanut Consumption in Infants at Risk for Peanut Allergy. *N Engl J Med* 2015; 372:803-813. <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmoa1414850>
- <sup>2</sup> Togias, et al. Addendum Guidelines for the Prevention Of Peanut Allergy in the United States: Report of the National Institute Of Allergy and Infectious Diseases—sponsored Expert Panel. 2017. <https://www.niaid.nih.gov/sites/default/files/addendum-peanut-allergy-prevention-guidelines.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020. Available at [DietaryGuidelines.gov](http://DietaryGuidelines.gov).
- <sup>4</sup> Perkin MR, Logan K, Marris T, et al. Enquiring About Tolerance (EAT) study: Feasibility of an early allergenic food introduction regimen. *J Allergy Clin Immunol*. 2016;137(5):1477-1486.e8. doi:10.1016/j.jaci.2015.12.1322
- <sup>5</sup> Sicherer, et al. Food Allergy from Infancy Through Adulthood. *JACI-In Practice*. 2020;8(6):1854-1864. [https://www.jaci-inpractice.org/article/S2213-2198\(20\)30159-8/fulltext](https://www.jaci-inpractice.org/article/S2213-2198(20)30159-8/fulltext)