

Mums giving babies solid foods later, research shows

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Australian mums have been given a tick of approval when it comes to choosing the right time to give their babies solid foods.

Research at The University of Queensland's Queensland Centre for Mothers & Babies (QCMB) has shown a dramatic decrease in the rate of the early introduction of solids, which is in line with current health recommendations.

Researcher Dr Wendy Brodribb said the results complemented recommendations of the World Health Organisation and the National Health and Medical Research Council that solids should not be given to babies until around six [months](#).

"Since the recommended time for the introduction of solids in Australia changed from four to six months, to six months in 2003, there has been a significant reduction in the proportion of infants given solids by 17 weeks," she said.

"At that time 44 percent of infants had been given solids compared to 8.6 percent in our study."

Dr Brodribb said it was pleasing to see these changes, as health professionals agreed other foods and fluids should not be introduced to either breast or formula-fed infants before 17 weeks because of an increased risk of infection, obesity and allergy.

She said although many Australian women were still introducing solids before the recommended six months (56.2 percent at five months), this figure was also much lower than in 2001 when 88 percent of infants had received solids by 26 weeks.

Dr Brodribb said the study found that if [babies](#) were given water early in their life, they were more likely to be given solids as well.

The research, titled "Introducing Solids and Water to Australian [Infants](#)," has been published in the *Journal of Human Lactation*.

The study is based on data from the QCMB's Having a Baby In Queensland Survey program, a biannual survey of thousands of Queensland [mums](#), run in conjunction with the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

More information: [DOI: 10.1177/0890334413478177](https://doi.org/10.1177/0890334413478177)

Provided by University of Queensland

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