

Experts question need to wait days between introducing new solid foods to infants

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The current recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) call for introducing to infants one single-ingredient food at a time

and waiting three to five days to observe for food allergy before introducing another new food. However, the long waiting period might be too long, given that food allergy becomes apparent within minutes to a few hours after eating a new food. A recent survey of pediatricians, published in *JAMA Network Open*, found significant variability in their recommendations to parents about solid food introduction, which calls into question the relevance of the current guidelines. The study authors suggest that these guidelines are out of synch with the latest approaches to food allergy prevention, and that the long waiting period might even be harmful.

"Waiting for days between each new [food](#) introduction to [infants](#) limits food diversity in the infant diet and may delay peanut introduction," says lead author Waheeda Samady, MD, from Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, who is an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

"There is now evidence that food diversity helps to decrease the development of allergic diseases in infants, and early peanut introduction is an important peanut [allergy](#) prevention strategy. The current guidelines on solid food introduction to infants might interfere with efforts to prevent food allergies, and may need to be reevaluated, especially in light of the variability in pediatric practice found in our study."

In the survey of 563 pediatric practitioners, nearly two-thirds recommended waiting less than three days and only half felt that waiting several days was helpful for families. A need for additional training on solid food introduction was reported by more than half of pediatricians participating in the survey.

"From the perspective of [food allergy](#) detection and prevention, there is no reason why a new food can't be tried every day," says senior author Ruchi Gupta, MD, MPH, Director of the Center of Food Allergy and Asthma Research (CFAAR) and Professor of Pediatrics and Medicine at

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and Lurie Children's. "The guidelines need to be revisited and updated to reflect the latest research on food allergy prevention and to provide greater clarity for pediatricians and parents on safe solid food introduction to infants."

Provided by Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

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