

Honey and Your Baby

Keeping your baby safe

Keep your baby safe by not giving them honey until 12 months of age.

Avoid both pasteurized and unpasteurized honey. Pasteurization or cooking does not kill the bacteria.

Do not give your baby honey, even if it is pasteurized.

Do not put honey on a baby pacifier.

Do not add honey to your baby's food.

Do not give your baby packaged food made with honey. This includes graham wafers and cereals that contain honey. Read the ingredients list to see if it contains honey.

Infant botulism

Your baby's stomach is still developing and they can get very sick if they eat honey. Honey can contain bacteria called *Clostridium botulinum*. If these bacteria get into your baby's stomach, they can cause a type of food poisoning called infant botulism.

Infant botulism is a serious disease. It can cause muscle weakness, difficulty breathing, and other symptoms.

Cultural traditions

Some cultural traditions involved giving a new baby a small amount of honey. We now know that honey is not safe for a baby.

You can still uphold traditions by offering a safer option. Speak to your doctor, midwife, or nurse practitioner about safer options such as a sugar (dextrose) solution, which the hospital can provide. Another option is to give a very small amount (2mL) of sterilized water with sugar mixed in.

Your milk

It is safe for you to eat honey, even if you are feeding your baby your milk. The bacteria does not go into your milk and will not go to your baby.

After 12 months of age

Children 12 months and older have more developed stomachs. They can safely eat honey.

If your child is immunocompromised, ask your doctor or nurse practitioner if your child can have honey.

More information



[Infant Botulism](#)

To learn more about infant botulism in Canada, go to canada.ca and search "baby honey," or scan this QR code.



[Baby's First Foods](#)

To learn more about feeding your baby solid food, go to [HealthlinkBC](https://healthlinkbc.ca) and search "baby first food," or scan this QR code.

Did you know?

The best way to keep your baby comfortable during painful procedures is to feed them your milk, ideally while holding them safely skin-to-skin. Your milk naturally reduces how much pain your baby feels.



[A Better Immunization Experience for Your Child](#)

If you are concerned about your baby and pain during immunizations, go to [HealthlinkBC](https://healthlinkbc.ca) and search "better pain," or scan this QR Code.