



When Not To Wean

In most cases, the decision to wean can be based on a mother's and child's inner needs and practical considerations relating to the family. However, it's best to put off weaning in some situations until a time when conditions are better. Such situations include:



- **Food allergies.** If you or your child's father have experienced food allergies, talk with your child's pediatrician or other health professional about the benefits of delaying weaning until at least after your child's first birthday. Avoiding cow's milk or cow's- milk-based products may be helpful.
- **Illness.** If your child has a cold, is teething, has recently been hospitalized, or is otherwise not in tip-top shape, put off initiating the weaning process until he feels better. You might also want to delay your first attempts if you feel under the weather. It's always best to meet any transition period when you and your child are at your physical and emotional best.
- **Changes at home.** If you are pregnant or have recently had a new baby, this may not be the best time to wean, unless led by your child. On the other hand, your needs and the needs of a newborn may take priority. Always breastfeed the newborn first, but try to be sensitive to the needs of everyone involved. Likewise, a move to a new home, a marital disruption, a new child care situation, your return to work, and other potentially stressful situations are not the best times to initiate another major change. Ideally, you will begin weaning when it's not overly stressful for you or your child.

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