

Why is arsenic more of a concern for babies?

- Babies are more likely than other age groups to be exposed to too much arsenic because they eat more food per pound of body weight.
- Some studies have shown that having arsenic in their body over a period of time, including before birth and during childhood, may cause subtle effects on a child's ability to learn and increase the risk of cancer when they become an adult.

That is why it is also wise for pregnant women to eat a variety of foods, including a variety of grains. This will provide good nutrition and limit arsenic exposure to their unborn baby.

What can I give my baby for their first food?

The American Academy of Pediatrics states there is no one food that is recommended as a first food. Introduce single-ingredient foods first, one at a time. Good low-arsenic first foods include oatmeal and barley cereal, pureed vegetables, beans, and meats.

Rice Your Family Eats

Choose and prepare wisely.

- Provide a well-balanced diet, including a variety of grains.
- Cook rice like you would pasta: in extra water (from 6 to 10 parts water to 1 part rice) that you drain off after cooking. This can cut arsenic levels by up to 60 percent. **Tip:** Dump cooked rice back into the pot and cover to steam off excess liquid.

Don't choose rice milk.

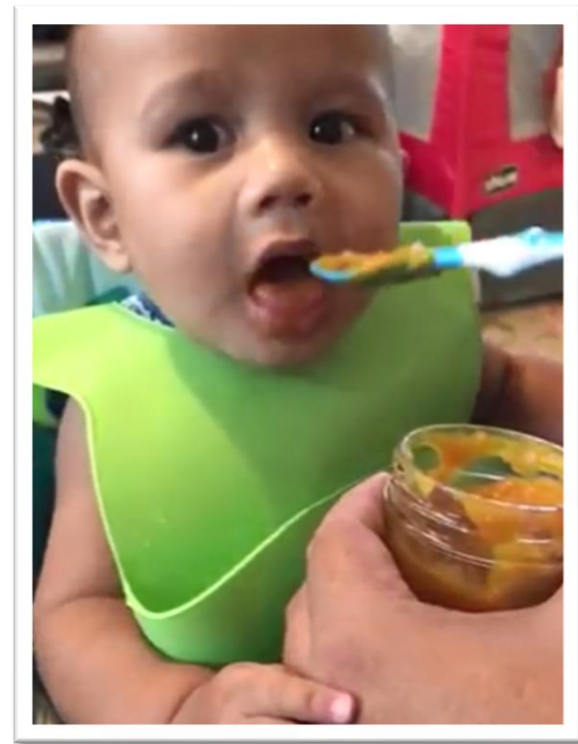
Young children should not be given rice milk on a regular basis without a specific need. Ask your pediatrician about other options.

For more information visit:

<https://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm493677.htm>

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Protect Your Baby from Arsenic in Rice and Other Foods



Learn what you can do

David Ige, Governor
Bruce S. Anderson Ph.D., Director of Health



About Arsenic

- Arsenic is a substance that can be found in soil, water, and many foods.
- Possible health risks from arsenic include cancer in adults and decreased learning ability for children.
- Rice-based foods are the main food source for arsenic – rice naturally absorbs a lot of arsenic from the environment.
- There are easy ways to cut down on the arsenic in your family's diet.

Baby's Cereal

Avoid infant rice cereal.

On average, rice cereal has 6 times more arsenic than other kinds of infant cereal. It is the #1 source of arsenic in an infant's diet.

Choose infant cereals that are naturally low in arsenic.

Oatmeal, barley, multi-grain, and other non-rice cereals are the best options. They are consistently low in arsenic and are a healthy choice for babies.

Introduce your baby to a variety of grains.

This gives them a variety of nutrients too.

FACT: Even multi-grain cereals with rice as an ingredient are good options. They have less than one-third as much arsenic as rice cereals.

My baby has already been eating rice cereal.

Should I be concerned?

- While there is no clear evidence of direct health effects from eating rice, the advice to avoid rice cereal is a safety measure since we know that eating rice will increase arsenic levels.
- Arsenic does not stay in the body for long. Start to offer foods low in arsenic and your baby's arsenic levels will decrease quickly.

FACT: The amount of arsenic from rice products in most cases is small and will not cause any symptoms in your children.

Other Foods



Serve whole fruit instead of juice.

- Apple, pear, and grape juices have been found to contain small amounts of arsenic. Since fruit juice offers no nutritional benefit to children under one year of age, juices should be avoided.
- Serve whole or pureed fruits (like applesauce) instead. A variety of soft fruits and vegetables like bananas and sweet potatoes is best.

Choose healthy, rice-free snacks.

Snacks likely to be high in arsenic include puffed rice, rice cakes, and other snacks sweetened with brown rice syrup. Choose rice-free snacks instead.