## Early years food choking hazards



Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

Vegetable and fruits	Advice
Pips or stones in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit.
Small fruits	Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters).
Large fruits and firm fruits	Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Vegetables	Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Skin on fruit and vegetables	Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily.
Cooking fruit and vegetables	Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons.
Meat and fish	Advice
Sausages and hot dogs	Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily.
Meat or fish	Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat.
Channe	
Cheese	Advice
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Grate or cut cheese  Nuts and seeds	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.  Advice  Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given
Grate or cut cheese  Nuts and seeds  Chop or flake whole nuts	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.  Advice  Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.
Grate or cut cheese  Nuts and seeds  Chop or flake whole nuts  Bread	Advice Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.  Advice White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good
Grate or cut cheese  Nuts and seeds  Chop or flake whole nuts  Bread  White bread and other breads	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.  Advice  Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.  Advice  White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.
Grate or cut cheese  Nuts and seeds Chop or flake whole nuts  Bread White bread and other breads  Snacks and other foods	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.  Advice  Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.  Advice  White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.  Advice
Grate or cut cheese  Nuts and seeds Chop or flake whole nuts  Bread White bread and other breads  Snacks and other foods Popcorn	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.  Advice  Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.  Advice  White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.  Advice  Do not give babies and young children popcorn.
Chop or flake whole nuts  Bread White bread and other breads  Snacks and other foods Popcorn Chewing gum and marshmallows	Advice Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.  Advice White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.  Advice Do not give babies and young children popcorn. Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows.
Grate or cut cheese  Nuts and seeds Chop or flake whole nuts  Bread White bread and other breads  Snacks and other foods Popcorn Chewing gum and marshmallows Peanut butter	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.  Advice Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.  Advice White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.  Advice Do not give babies and young children popcorn. Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows. Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread.

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/">https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/</a>
It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-</a>
and How to resuscitate a child: <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-</a>