NHS
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Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Reintroduction of soya

To confirm tolerance after a period of soya exclusion

Many children grow out of their soya allergy by around 5 years of age. By reintroducing soya slowly, step by step (using the Soya Ladder), you can find out which soya products your child can tolerate.

For some children who have had severe reactions or have asthma, it may not be safe to do this at home. Ask your GP, allergy specialist or dietitian if you are unsure.

Do not use the soya ladder if your child:

- Is unwell (for example has a cough, cold or fever)
- Has eczema flares (eczema should be well controlled)
- is teething
- Has tummy symptoms such as sickness (vomiting), loose stools, or tummy pain
- Is taking medicines that may affect the gut, such as antibiotics

Using the Soya Ladder

- Start with Step 1. If your child already eats foods from a higher step of the soya ladder without problems, you may start at that step.
- If your child has had more severe reactions, start with a ¼ or a ½ portion and slowly increase to a full child-sized portion over a few days.
- Offer the food daily, every other day, or 2-3 times per week,

depending on how quickly symptoms may appear.

- If the food is well tolerated after a few times, keep it in your child's diet and move on to the next step. For example, if step 1 foods are tolerated, move on to step 2.

If your child has a reaction

- Stop giving the foods from the current step only.
- Go back to the previously tolerated step.
- Try the step again after 2-3 months.

If your child is ill during the soya Ladder

- Pause the current step of the milk ladder until your child is well again.
- Continue giving foods that have already been tolerated.

Top tips:

- Introduce new foods earlier in the day (morning or lunchtime), so you can observe symptoms.
- Take your time, avoid starting new foods when you are busy, such as during holidays or when starting nursery.
- Keep a record of what your child eats and any symptoms.
- Be aware of other allergies your child may have (for example to wheat, egg, or milk). Always check food labels for suitability.

The Soya Ladder

Start with small amounts of food and slowly increase the quantity.

Stage	Examples of foods. There will be others so check the labels
Stage 1 **Soya flour in baked foods**	• Bread containing soya flour, e.g. Asda, Sainsburys, Aldi, Kingsmill 50/50 (note: may contain nuts). Aim for 1 slice, 1 roll, 1 pitta, or 1 bagel as a portion • Other breaded products containing soya flour, e.g. Warburtons, or supermarket own-brand fruit teacakes, pittas, and bagels

	Options that are wheat, egg, and milk free: • Asda free from or ShahTM digestive biscuits (2 biscuits) • Soya in a wheat-free product: Bokomo ProNutro breakfast cereal (30g) • New York Bakery CoTM Gluten Free Bagels (1 bagel)
Stage 2 **Cooked soya**	• Shepherd's pie with soya milk and/or soya cheese in the mashed potato • Lasagne or fish pie made with soya milk and/or soya cheese • Pizza cooked with soya cheese • Soya cheese on toast (15g)
Stage 3 **Lightly cooked soya**	• Soya custard (1 small pot/ 125g) • Heated soya cream cheese (15g) - e.g. Asda, or Sainsbury's free from cream cheese • Cooked edamame beans (40g) • Heated soya milk or hot chocolate (boiled for 5 minutes) • Rice pudding, tapioca or semolina made with soya milk • Cooked or stir-fried tofu (30g), e.g. in vegetarian sausages or burgers • Edamame spaghetti (30g) - available from Holland & Barrett
Stage 4 **Uncooked soya products**	• Soya yoghurt (125g) • Uncooked soya cheese (15g) • Soya spread (1 tablespoon) • Soya ice cream (1 scoop/ 50g)
Stage 5 **Soya milk**	• Alpro soya growing up drink or supermarket own-brand soya milk Start with 50ml of soya milk and increase by 50ml per day until your child reaches their usual milk amount. **If your child tolerates a full portion of soya for 3 days, they can include soya freely in their diet.**

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