

Inappropriate weaning practices in healthy 6-month old Irish Infants. Tarrant, R et al., 2007¹

An Irish Study which recruited 400 infants showed failure to comply with the current weaning recommendations during the first 6 months of life.

1. 5% of mothers were adding inappropriate solid foods such as rusk and baby rice to formula feeds primarily to promote sleep.
2. 59% of infants were consuming at least one snack daily in between their main meals with 8% snacking on chocolate, 7% on biscuits, 4 % on crisps and 6% of infants were offered these snacks at least 4 times per week.
3. 35% of mothers had reported that they were adding extra condiments to their baby's weaning foods, with ordinary gravy the most common, followed by butter, sauces, sugar/honey, vegetables and table salt.

Authors conclude: There needs to be a greater awareness of the adverse health consequences associated with the high consumption of sugary/salty foods which gives rise to the development of dental caries and increased renal solute load needs to be highlighted during the early months after birth.

Healthcare professionals should also consider educating mothers on the importance of healthy snack options in the context of an appropriate weaning diet, as part of the overall advice.

¹ Tarrant, Roslyn, Sheridan-Pereira, M, Younger, KM and Kearney, JM 2007. Inappropriate weaning practices in a sample of healthy 6 month old Irish infants. Presented at INDI conference (abstract)