

SPOONAPHOBIA?

A parent's guide to when and how to introduce utensils into self-feeding.

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The Science Supports Your Fear.

The spoon looks deceptively simple. In actuality, it requires a range of motor skills to maneuver. One skill in particular is the secret to effectively using the spoon: wrist rotation.





Dipping Precedes Scooping.

From a developmental standpoint, dipping precedes scooping because it doesn't require full wrist rotation.





Readiness Indicators:

- Child can sit up on his own with little to no support
- Child can grasp, hold and bring teething to mouth
- Child expresses an interest in self-feeding

This understanding has led to the emergence of the pre-spoon, a new category of spoons designed around the dipping motion. The NumNum® GOOtensil™ was one of the first products in this category. Designed for purees and other blended foods, the NumNum pre-spoon is easier to use than a spoon because the head is flat, so there's no wrong way to hold it. All your child has to do is dip, eat and repeat!



NumNum
GOOtensils

Transitioning to the Spoon

As your child enjoys the independence of self-feeding with a pre-spoon, he or she is secretly working to develop wrist rotation.





It's true! Of course, they're building these skills at the table and away from it. Playing with toys, eating finger foods, even climbing on the couch all facilitate development of wrist rotation. When you notice all the developmental cues below, congratulations! Your child is now ready to graduate to the spoon.



Readiness Indicators:

- Child has successfully mastered the bowl-to-mouth motion
- Child is maneuvering the pre-spoon with greater agility
- Child is dipping well and starting to scoop the bottom of the bowl

Utensil Development Do's and Don'ts

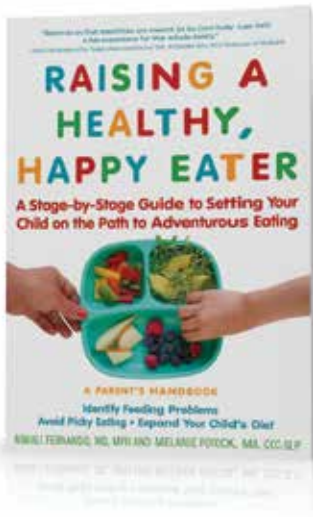
Follow these simple guidelines and you will, simultaneously, conquer your Spoonaphobia as your child masters utensils.

Do

- Start Utensil Training with Purees or Blends. Chopped or larger solids may lead to frustration.
- Expect Some Mess. They are kids! Plus, the occasional messy or sensory food experience encourages adventurous eating.
- Read your Child's Cues. Gently present new foods and the pre-spoon each day. Positive practice as your child grows is key.
- Be Patient. Kids develop at their own pace.

Don't

- Begin with More Advanced Utensils. If it's difficult for your child to maneuver, it could lead to frustration and picky eating.
- Punish your Child for Dropping a Utensil on the Floor. Often, the child is trying to communicate something about the food, the utensil or both.
- Rush It. The path to mastering dipping, scooping and balancing is a journey, not a race.



Melanie Potock, MA, CCC-SLP is an author, media expert and international speaker on the topic of “feeding” and helping children learn to be more adventurous eaters. She works with young children experiencing a variety of challenges, from medical conditions that impact their ability to enjoy food to garden-variety picky eaters. Her new book *Raising a Healthy, Happy Eater: A Stage-by-Stage Guide to Setting Your Child on the Path to Adventurous Eating* is now on virtual bookshelves and in bookstores everywhere.

The NumNum GOOtensil was developed by parents who once suffered from Spoonphobia. Now 100% cured, the couple is on a mission to eradicate this all-too-common fear. To learn more about their story or their innovative product, visit numnumbaby.us.