

# Helping Prevent Aspiration and Choking

## ~Keeping Children Safe~

In recent years, cases of infants and young children choking or aspirating food have been reported across the country, and many children are taken to the emergency room every year. Aspiration and choking can occur unexpectedly in everyday situations and can be life-threatening. In this month's Food Education Newsletter, we introduce foods that require particular caution during infancy and early childhood, as well as key points to keep in mind at home. We hope this information helps ensure that your child can enjoy meals safely and happily every day.

### Preventing Aspiration and Choking Accidents

This material is an awareness resource issued by the Children and Families Agency to promote efforts to prevent aspiration accidents in educational and childcare facilities.

The content is useful not only for meal provision in childcare settings but also as a reference for mealtimes at home.

You can access helpful materials using the QR code on the right.

We hope you will make use of them in your daily meal preparation and supervision.

Please note that all materials are available only in Japanese.



#### [Foods to Avoid for Infants and Young Children]

**✗Mochi (sticky rice cake) / Shiratama dumplings**

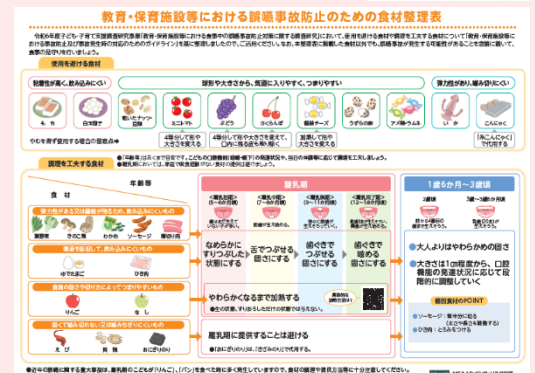
...Highly sticky and difficult to swallow

**✗Nuts / Cherry tomatoes / Grapes / Cherries /  
Cheese balls / Quail eggs / Hard candies /  
Ramune candies**

...Their round shape and size make them easy to enter and block the airway.

**✗Squid / Konjac (konnyaku)**

...Very chewy and difficult for children to bite through.



こども家庭庁：「令和6年度子ども子育て支援調査研究事業(国庫補助)」「教育・保育施設等における食事中の誤嚥事故防止対策に関する調査研究事業」本事業の実施主体：MS&ADインターナショナル株式会社、2025年3月

#### [Child Safety: Accident Prevention Handbook]

On the website of the Children and Families Agency, you can find not only information on food-related aspiration and choking accidents, but also a handbook that summarizes various accidents commonly occurring among children aged 0 to 6, along with preventive measures and emergency responses.

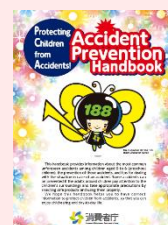
In addition to the Japanese version, English and Chinese editions are also available for reference.

#### <How to Search>

Children and Families Agency website

→ Search

→ Distribution: Consumer Affairs Agency



## About Serving Apples

Although apples become smaller when chewed, they are still a food that can easily become lodged in the throat.

For this reason, it is recommended that apples be cooked before being given to children until they have completed the weaning period.

### 🍏 Tips for Serving Grated Apple 🍏

#### ▣ Grate the apple thoroughly so no small lumps remain.

Always check after grating to ensure there are no remaining chunks.

#### ▣ Use a grater without holes.

Hole-type graters leave coarse fibers that can become a choking hazard.

#### ▣ Extra caution is needed around 5–6 months of age.

At this stage, babies may suck out only the juice, leaving fibrous solids in the mouth, which can cause choking.

Do not give raw grated apple; always heat it and serve it in a smooth, thick puree-like consistency.

Please scan this QR code to view the information.



## Precautions When Feeding

There are several important points to keep in mind not only regarding food types and preparation methods, but also when feeding children.

Please keep the following points in mind during mealtimes at home.

- ◆ Offer food at a timing that suits the child, so they can eat slowly and calmly.
- ◆ Give small, appropriate portions that fit the child's mouth (avoid putting too much in at once).
- ◆ Make sure the child has swallowed each bite and that no food remains in the mouth.
- ◆ Provide fluids appropriately, such as soups or drinks, to help moisten the throat.
- ◆ Avoid startling the child during meals.

※ Sudden surprises can cause a child to inhale sharply, increasing the risk of food being drawn into the airway.

- ◆ Stop the meal if the child becomes sleepy, very upset, or starts crying.

※ Crying increases the force of inhalation, which raises the risk of choking.

- ◆ Ensure the child is seated properly.



## Precautions for Packed Lunches (Bento)

Some foods commonly used in packed lunches can pose a choking risk.

Because the items listed below can easily enter the airway when served whole, please be sure to cut them into smaller, safer pieces or avoid using them in lunch boxes.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping ensure that children can eat safely.

### <Foods That Can Easily Cause Choking Due to Their Round Shape or Size>

Cherry tomatoes, grapes, cherries, meatball, cheese balls, quail eggs, edamame, etc.

