



Feeding Your Baby

After the baby: Daily food choices for the breastfeeding mom

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It is important that your diet supplies the necessary nutrients while you breastfeed. You need slightly more nutrients than during pregnancy. To get the most nutrients from the extra calories, choose nutrient-rich foods from each of the food groups. The following recommendations are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. This may be more or less than what you need. For a diet plan to meet your needs, go to <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/moms-daily-food-plan>.

Grains

Eat 6 ounces. A 1-ounce serving is:

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 small biscuit
- 6-inch tortilla
- 3 to 4 small crackers
- ½ cup cooked rice, or pasta
- 1 cup of ready-to-eat breakfast cereal



Try to choose at least three servings of whole grains, such as oatmeal, whole-wheat bread, whole-wheat pastas, corn tortillas, brown rice and air-popped popcorn. Whole grains are a good source of fiber.

An easy way to get enough fiber is to fill half of your plate with vegetables and fruits. Make at least half your grains whole-grains.

Eating enough fiber will help you feel full.

Vegetables

Eat 2 ½ cups daily. A 1-cup serving is:

- 1 cup cooked or raw vegetables
- 2 cups of leafy green salad
- 1 medium potato (about the size of a small fist)

Choose a variety of colorful vegetables to get all the nutrients both you and your baby need. Try to eat dark green vegetables like broccoli and spinach, red and orange vegetables like carrots, tomatoes and sweet potatoes and beans and peas. Remember that fresh, frozen and canned all count.

Fruits

Eat 2 cups daily. A 1-cup serving is:

- 1 apple or orange (about the size of a baseball)
- 1 cup of canned fruit
- 1 cup of raw, cut-up fruit

To get the most nutrients, eat fruit as a dessert or snack. They are low in fat, naturally sweet, and high in fiber. If you eat canned fruits, look for those packed in juice or water. Try to avoid canned fruits that are packaged in sugar or syrup.

Dairy

Eat 3 cups daily. A 1-cup serving is equal to:

- 1 cup of milk
- 1 cup of yogurt
- 1 ½ ounces of natural cheese

Choose low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt and other milk products. Dairy products contain nutrients that are healthy for you and your baby. If you don't or can't eat dairy products, choose lactose-free milk or foods and drinks that have calcium.

Protein

Eat 5 ½ ounces daily. A 1-ounce serving is:

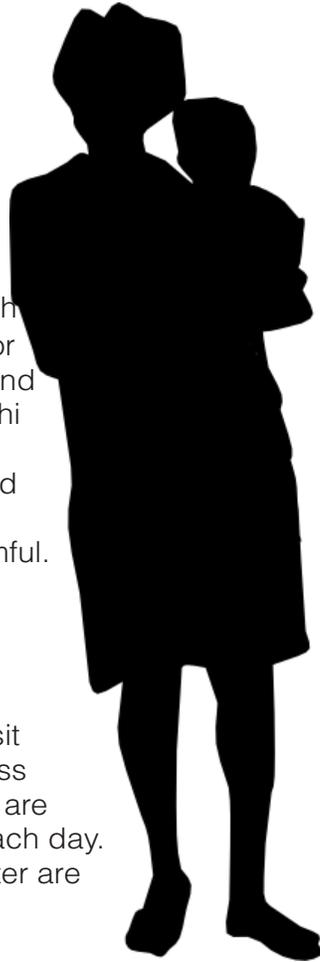
- 1 ounce of cooked, lean meat, poultry or fish (a 3 ounce serving is about the size of a deck of cards)
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup of beans or peas
- 1 tablespoon of peanut butter
- ½ ounce of nuts

Choose lean poultry and meats. Remove fat from meat and skin from chicken before cooking. Low-fat cooking methods include baking, broiling, grilling and poaching.

When eating fish, you may safely eat up to 12 ounces each week of salmon, canned light or albacore tuna, tilapia, catfish and shellfish. Fish such as shark, ahi tuna and swordfish are high in mercury and should be avoided during pregnancy. In excess amounts, mercury can be harmful.

What else do I need?

Remember fluids! Liquids are important while you are breastfeeding. Each time you sit down to breastfeed have a glass of water. Drink fluids when you are thirsty, 8 to 12 cups of liquid each day. Low-fat or fat-free milk and water are good choices.



Go slow on empty calorie foods. These foods contain solid fats and added sugars that add calories but few or no nutrients. Examples include cakes, cookies, pastries, candies and sugar-sweetened beverages.

Your doctor may tell you to keep taking your prenatal vitamins. Ask your doctor about vitamins and mineral supplements, especially iron and fluoride, for your baby.

Non-food items – they do affect your baby.

Drugs taken by a breastfeeding mother enter her milk and may be dangerous to the baby. Ask your doctor about any medicine you are taking, such as non-prescription drugs or birth control pills.

Caffeine in coffee, tea, cocoa and sodas can be transferred to your baby in your breast milk. Too much caffeine can make you and your baby irritable. Limit coffee and soft drinks to less than two cups per day.

Avoid consuming alcohol while you are breastfeeding. Even small amounts of alcohol may change the odor and flavor of breast milk and can decrease milk production. If you drink too much, it can also cause your baby to be less alert and may cause poor brain development.

Smoking cigarettes while you are breastfeeding is not recommended. Smoking reduces the amount of milk produced and may cause your baby to become nauseated and vomit.

Cigarette smoke in the air is also harmful to both you and your baby's lungs. If you must smoke, try to avoid smoking 2 ½ hours before nursing.

References:

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Promoting and Supporting Breastfeeding. 2015.

U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015-2020. 8th edition, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 2015.