

What to eat when you are breastfeeding

There is a new baby in your family! Eating well while you breastfeed your baby will give you more energy and will help speed up your recovery from childbirth.

Food Pyramid

As a breastfeeding mom, what kind of foods should I eat?

While you are breastfeeding, you will need about 400-500 more calories each day. Eat a variety of foods to keep up your energy level and nourish you and your baby. You can get these extra calories by eating snacks between meals.

Food Groups	Servings per day	Examples of Foods
Calcium-rich Foods	3	Milk, yogurt, cheese, shrimp with shell, sardines, small dried fish, tofu, sesame seeds
Protein and Iron-rich Foods	3	Beef, pork, chicken, turkey, fish, duck, eggs, peanuts, green beans, soybeans, black beans, peanut butter, seeds such as pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds
Vitamin A-rich Fruits and Vegetables	1	Water spinach, mustard greens, persimmon, carrots, yams, red bell pepper, mango, papaya, asparagus, pumpkin, tomato, dark green leafy vegetables
Vitamin C-rich Fruits and Vegetables	1	Orange juice, kiwi, pineapples, strawberries, oranges, tangerines, lemons, pomelo, green pepper, paprika
Other Fruits and Vegetables	3.	Vegetable sponge, lotus roots, taro, green beans, waxgourd, bean sprouts, corn, cauliflower, Chinese spinach, bananas, apples, grapes
Carbohydrate-rich Foods	7	Rice, rice vermicelli, rice noodle, baguette, rice paper, flour, cereal, bagel, crackers

- **1 serving is 1 C milk, 1/2 C cooked rice, 1 slice of bread, 1/2 C cooked vegetable, 2 eggs or 2 oz of cooked meat.**

Do I need to drink milk to make breastmilk?

NO! Remember that the way to make more breastmilk is to breastfeed your baby on demand and more frequently. Pregnancy and breastfeeding does increase your need for calcium (chat voi). One way to get calcium is to drink cow's milk. There are also other foods that will provide the calcium that you and your baby need (see the food guide).

Picture of mother breastfeeding

Do I need to drink more water if I breastfeed?

YES! It is a good idea to drink more fluids when you are breastfeeding and water is a great source. You need to drink around eight 8oz glasses of liquids a day, such as water, milk, juice, soups (broths).

I don't eat everything that I am supposed to eat. Will my milk still be good?

YES! Even if you do not eat everything that you are supposed to, your body will still make plenty of milk for you and your baby. It is important to get enough healthy food so that you will have the energy to take care of your baby and to be a healthy mom. Don't worry if your diet is not perfect every day. Just do the best that you can.

Is there anything that I should not eat or drink while I am breastfeeding?

You should eat a good healthy diet just like you did during your pregnancy. In general, most babies will not be bothered by any particular foods, so most mothers can eat whatever they want, in moderation. However, if your baby seems fussy or uncomfortable after you eat a certain food, you may want to avoid it for awhile.

Picture of foods to avoid

Watch what you drink. Alcohol and caffeine passes from you into your breastmilk and can harm your baby. Limit coffee, tea and sodas with caffeine. Also, limit your alcohol intake.

For additional information, please contact:

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