

RAISING ADVENTUROUS EATERS with first foods

Understanding your body's needs—for food, sleep, movement and stress reduction—is essential to make empowered personal decisions about your pregnancy. Now is the time to build a support system by engaging the people around you for support to care for your needs, including what food you want to eat. Here are food guidelines to support a healthy pregnancy and positively impact the short and long-term health of you and your child.



Choose Color

Increase the variety and quantity of colorful veggies and fruits (aim for a rainbow of foods every day) to not only maximize your nutrient intake, but to also impact your baby's taste preferences for healthy foods. That's right - your baby can "taste" what you're eating via your amniotic fluid (the liquid around the baby during pregnancy). This early exposure helps prepare for a non-picky eater.



Choose Quality

Emphasize whole foods such as colorful veggies and fruits, whole grains (oats, whole wheat bread, brown rice), calcium-rich dairy (milk, yogurt, cottage cheese), plant-based and lean animal protein sources (beans, nuts, lean meat), and healthy fat options (olive oil, nuts/seeds, eggs, fish, avocados, olives). Choose more foods close to their natural state and limit processed food when you can.



Choose Density

Pregnancy is a crucial time when protein needs are very high and dietary protein deficiency is common (especially for vegetarians/vegans). Consume a wide variety of high-quality protein (lean meat, eggs, dairy, beans, nuts) for higher energy levels, less nausea, improved development and birth weight for your baby, and lower risk of preeclampsia (dangerous high blood pressure during pregnancy).

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breast milk:

all milk expressed through breastfeeding, chestfeeding or pumping



Choose Clear

When you're pregnant, your body needs more fluid to help form the baby's amniotic fluid and to bring nutrients to the baby with proper blood circulation. Aim to drink 100 ounces per day (about 12 cups) of water. Avoid sugar-sweetened beverages, which can cause dehydration. If drinking water is a challenge, try adding fruit slices to flavor your water naturally, or try eating hydrating fresh produce such as cucumbers, watermelon, bell peppers, radishes, spinach, and tomatoes.



Choose Key Nutrients

There are crucial nutrients that you and your baby need as you grow together, and it can be hard to find enough of them in food. Take a daily comprehensive prenatal vitamin that includes iron, folate, vitamin B12, calcium, choline, vitamin D, zinc, and omega-3 fatty acids (EPA/DHA). These specific vitamins and minerals are important during all trimesters of your pregnancy and into the postnatal period.



Choose You

A partner or support network is especially important for your health and wellbeing during pregnancy and for care of your baby. Once your baby arrives, eating to support your needs in postpartum is foundational for your delivery recovery, hormone balance, mood, and energy levels. Continue to follow the healthy eating/drinking tips above, including taking a high quality prenatal vitamin. Staying hydrated is very important, as breast milk is 90% water.



Choose For The Future

The nutrition decisions made during pregnancy will help keep your baby healthy into adulthood, shape food and taste preferences when they start solid food, and set up successful nursing. The diverse flavors you eat will pass through your breast milk, just like they did when your baby was in utero.



The information contained in this guide should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

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