

Postpartum Nutrition

Eat well for recovery and breastfeeding.



Why?

You ate well during your pregnancy in order to grow a healthy baby. Now it's time to eat well to feed your baby, and to help your body recover from pregnancy and birth. A postpartum and breastfeeding mom has increased caloric and nutritional needs.

It is common for families and friends to offer you food and meals during the postpartum period. Accept their offer with a smile! Freeze meals in single serving portions, if you have an abundance of meals. *Remember to keep drinking plenty of water.*

Helpful Suggestions

For the fridge:

- ∞ Freezer meals – soups, pasta, casseroles
- ∞ Hard boiled eggs
- ∞ Yogurt
- ∞ Cheese
- ∞ Fruits
- ∞ Veggies

Easy & Healthy Snacks:

- ∞ Cheese
- ∞ Nuts
- ∞ Popcorn
- ∞ Raw veggies and fruits
- ∞ Oatmeal with fruit and honey
- ∞ Smoothies
- ∞ Granola

Easy Meals:

- ∞ Soups
- ∞ Casseroles
- ∞ Tacos
- ∞ Salad and diced chicken
- ∞ Beans and rice with veggies
- ∞ Healthy take-out

Healthy eating habits can be established in the postpartum time. You will be a good example to your child as they grow and feel great as you fill your body with nutritious foods!



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Daily Nutritional Needs

For postpartum

Calories	2500
Protein (meat, dairy, beans)	60-70g
Vitamins:	
A (eggs, fish, dairy, vegetables)	6000IU
C (citrus fruits, whole grains)	100mg
D (fish oil, sunshine)	400IU
E (whole grains, eggs, nut butters)	16 IU
Folate (leafy greens, nuts, oranges)	.6mg
Niacin (poultry, fish, nuts, dairy)	18mg
B6 (molasses, bananas, brown rice)	2.5mg
B12 (all meats, fish, dairy)	4mcg
Calcium (dairy, greens, legumes)	1500mg
Phosphorus (meat, eggs, grains)	1200mg
Iodine (seaweed, seafood)	200mcg
Iron (molasses, greens, fish)	48-78 mg
Magnesium(whole grains, nuts, greens)	450mg
Zinc (meat, poultry, eggs, fish)	25mg



If you were taking any supplements during your pregnancy, continue taking those daily, unless your midwife suggests otherwise. Supplements are an easy way to bolster your good nutrition habits, and in some cases necessary to make up for a nutritional or metabolic deficiency.

Reference:

Davis, E. (2012). *Heart and hands: A midwife's guide to pregnancy and birth*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press.
 Lim, R. (2001). *After the baby's birth: A complete guide for postpartum women*. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts.
 Olson, J., Immel, K., Peternell, S. (2014). *Following the birth: your guide to postpartum*. Parker, Colorado: Plumtree Baby.



Give yourself time and patience to return to your pre-pregnancy weight.

Diet and Recovery

What you eat will affect your recovery time and influence your baby's health. Eat well and try to avoid caffeine and processed foods. Breastfeeding burns around 500 extra calories per day, so eat plenty!

- Drink a glass of water each time you nurse to avoid dehydration.
- Eat plenty of iron rich foods to avoid fatigue and strengthen your immunity.
- Eat high fiber foods each day (veggies and fruits) to avoid constipation.
- Consume protein often to help rebuild your muscles.
- To help wounds heal, eat foods rich in zinc.
- Foods that contain calcium help to rebuild your bone density and improve nerve function.