



Nutrition for Breastfeeding Mothers: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

When a woman breastfeeds her baby, she needs more nutrients to keep herself healthy and to make the baby's milk.

Breastfeeding helps build the bond between you and your baby. It gives your baby excellent health benefits.

A healthy diet includes eating a variety of foods from the basic food groups: grains, vegetables, fruits, milk and milk products (such as cheese and yogurt), and meat and dried beans. Eating well during breastfeeding will ensure that you stay healthy and your baby grows and develops normally.



Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- ❖ Include 3 to 4 cups of nonfat or low-fat milk or milk products in your diet every day. These include:
 - Milk (8 ounces equals 1 cup).
 - Ice cream (1½ cups equals 1 cup of milk).
 - Cheese (1½ ounces of cheese equals 1 cup).
 - Yogurt (8 ounces equals 1 cup).
- ❖ Eat at least 7 ounces of grains, such as cereals, breads, crackers, rice, or pasta, every day. One ounce is about 1 slice of bread, 1 cup of breakfast cereal, or ½ cup of cooked rice, cereal, or pasta.
- ❖ Eat 3 cups of vegetables each day. Choices include:
 - Dark-green vegetables such as broccoli and spinach.
 - Orange vegetables such as carrots and sweet potatoes.
 - Dried beans (such as pinto and kidney beans) and peas (such as lentils).
- ❖ Every day, eat 2 cups of fresh, frozen, or canned fruit.
- ❖ Eat 6½ ounces each day of protein, such as chicken, fish, lean meat, eggs, peanut butter, dried beans and peas, nuts, and seeds. One egg, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or ½ ounce of nuts or seeds equals 1 ounce of protein. A ½ cup of cooked beans equals 2 ounces of protein.
- ❖ Drink plenty of fluids, enough so that your urine is light yellow or clear like water. If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.

- › Limit caffeine products, such as coffee, tea, chocolate, and some sodas. Caffeine can pass to your baby through breast milk. It may cause fussiness and sleep problems in babies.
- › Your doctor may recommend a vitamin supplement. Take it as recommended.
- › Consider joining a breastfeeding support group. These are offered at many hospitals and birthing centers by nurses, nurse-midwives, or lactation consultants.

When should you call for help?



Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

Where can you learn more?

Go to [NextGen Knowledgebase](#).

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