

# What to Eat When You're *Expecting*



A Guide on Healthy Food  
Choices for Pregnant Women



# Healthy Choices

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You get a lot of advice and new information when you're pregnant. Something as simple as knowing what to eat can become overwhelming.

You know that eating a balanced diet is important; but are there foods that are more important for you and your baby than others? Yes and no. Eating foods from all food groups keeps you healthy and encourages your baby's growth, but there are also some essential nutrients that can provide exceptional benefits for you and your baby.

This guide highlights those nutrients and what you can include in your diet to make sure you're getting enough.



# Calcium



## WHY...



For strong bones and teeth and to support muscle, heart and nerve development



For strong bones and teeth

## HOW MUCH... 1000 milligrams in four servings daily

There are about 300 milligrams of calcium in 1 cup of milk, about 450 milligrams in 1 cup of yogurt and about 200 milligrams in 1 cup of ice cream.

## WHERE TO FIND IT...

- Broccoli, kale and spinach
- Dried fruit
- Edamame and quinoa
- Dairy, especially Greek yogurt and milk
- Fruit juices and breakfast cereals fortified with calcium
- Salmon

# Vitamin D



## WHY...



For strong bones and teeth



For bone health and immune function

## HOW MUCH... 600 IU daily

There are about 40-60 IU of vitamin D in 1 egg, about 115 IU in 1 cup of fortified milk and about 130 IU in 1 cup of orange juice.

## WHERE TO FIND IT...

- Fortified milk and orange juice
- Salmon and other fatty fish
- Eggs

# Folate/Folic Acid



## WHY...



To prevent problems with the brain and spinal cord during development



For healthy growth of the placenta

## HOW MUCH... 400-800 micrograms (mcg) daily

There are about 55 mcg of folate in 1 cup of spinach and broccoli, about 175 mcg in ½ cup of peanuts and about 55 mcg in 1 large orange.

## WHERE TO FIND IT...

- Whole grains
- Spinach, kale, broccoli, avocados and peas
- Peanuts, dried beans, edamame and lentils
- Citrus fruits
- Fortified cereals

# Iodine



## WHY...



For brain and nervous system development



For thyroid hormone production

## HOW MUCH... 220 micrograms (mcg) daily

There are about 85 mcg of iodine in an 8-ounce serving of milk, about 30 mcg in a 4-ounce serving of salmon and 185 mcg in a single slice of white bread.

## WHERE TO FIND IT...

- Milk, cheese and yogurt
- Fish, especially salmon
- Iodized salt
- Enriched bread and fortified cereal

# Protein



## WHY...



To promote growth of the muscles, skin and bones



To provide energy to mother's brain, muscle and blood, all of which are changing during pregnancy

## HOW MUCH... 70-100 grams in three servings daily

There are about 30 grams of protein in a 3.5-ounce serving of chicken breast, about 20 grams in a 7-ounce serving of Greek yogurt and 18 grams in 1 cup of edamame.

## WHERE TO FIND IT...

- Lean meat, poultry, seafood and eggs
- Greek yogurt, cottage cheese and milk
- Quinoa
- Peas, beans, lentils, edamame, nuts, seeds and soy products
- Peanut butter



## Iron



### WHY...



To promote growth and healthy birthweight



To prevent anemia in mom and help her make more blood to supply oxygen to baby

### HOW MUCH... 27 milligrams (mg) daily

There are about 2 mg of iron in 3-ounces of beef, about 2.7 grams in ½ cup of spinach and 3 mg in ½ cup of dried apricots

### WHERE TO FIND IT...

- Lean meat and poultry
- Spinach, broccoli and kale
- Whole grains (oatmeal, popcorn and brown rice)
- Dried fruit
- Quinoa, edamame and beans
- Fortified cereal

## Water



### WHY...



Promote baby's blood circulation



Increase blood production and form amniotic fluid in mom

### HOW MUCH... At least 10 8-ounce glasses daily

## Supplements








Supplements help if you have nutrient deficiencies. Your health care provider can recommend supplements.

# Daily Food Checklist



## Did you know that the amount of food you need changes throughout the stages of pregnancy?

The chart below outlines how much of each food group is needed in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters.\*

FOOD GROUP	1 <sup>ST</sup> TRIMESTER	2 <sup>ND</sup> and 3 <sup>RD</sup> TRIMESTERS	What counts as 1 cup or 1-ounce serving
<b>Grains</b> 	2 cups	2 cups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice bread = 1 ounce</li> <li>• 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal = 1 ounce</li> <li>• ½ cup cooked pasta or cooked rice = 1 ounce</li> </ul>
<b>Fruits</b> 	2 ½ cups	3 cups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 small apple or 1 large banana = 1 cup</li> <li>• ⅓ cup dried blueberries or mango = 1 cup</li> <li>• 8 large strawberries = 1 cup</li> </ul>
<b>Vegetables</b> 	¾ cup	1 cup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 medium carrots or 1 large tomato = 1 cup</li> <li>• 2 cups raw leafy salad greens = 1 cup</li> <li>• 1 medium potato or 1 large sweet potato = 1 cup</li> </ul>
<b>Protein</b> 	5 ½ ounces	6 ½ ounces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 egg = 1 ounce</li> <li>• ½ ounce of nuts or ½ ounce of seeds = 1 ounce</li> <li>• 6 tablespoons hummus = 1 ounce</li> </ul>
<b>Dairy</b> 	3 cups	3 cups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup milk or 1 cup yogurt = 1 cup</li> <li>• 2 cups cottage cheese = 1 cup</li> </ul>

\* These are general amounts and you may need more or less of any food group.

\*\*Adapted from Dietary Guidelines for Americans and <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/guidance>

# Food and Drinks to Avoid



Just as there are foods that are good for your health and your baby's development, there are foods and drinks that can cause harm to both of you.

## ALCOHOL . . .

It is not safe to drink alcohol during pregnancy. It can cause miscarriage, premature birth and serious problems for the baby after birth.

## CAFFEINE . . .

Even low caffeine intake may result in lower birth weight and shorter height in childhood, according to studies cited by NIH. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, soda, energy drinks and chocolate.

## CERTAIN FISH . . .

Swordfish, king mackerel, orange roughy, tilefish, bigeye tuna and other fish high in mercury should be avoided. The mercury, or methylmercury, can impair your baby's growing brain and nervous system.

## DELI MEATS . . .

Ham, chicken and seafood salads may contain listeria, bacteria that can cause premature birth. Hot dogs, cold cuts and lunch meats should be heated to 165°F before eating to avoid foodborne illness or "food poisoning." Your baby's immune system cannot fight off the bacteria, parasites and viruses.

## RAW FOODS . . .

Raw eggs, sprouts, meat and seafood and unpasteurized dairy products may cause foodborne illness or "food poisoning" that your baby's immune system is not ready to fight.

### Still have questions?

Check out our Knowledge Center at [boystownpediatrics.org](https://www.boystownpediatrics.org) for answers and interesting topics focused on how to prepare for your new baby and children of all ages.