



## Nutrition Tips for the Breastfeeding Mom

*Good nutrition is just as important while breastfeeding as it was during pregnancy*

Enjoy a variety of nutritious foods



### **Emphasize vegetables and fruits**

7 or 8 servings every day. Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day. Examples of one Food Guide serving: ½ cup of fresh, frozen or canned vegetable; 1 medium fruit.



### **Emphasize whole grain cereals, breads, and other grain products**

6 or 7 servings each day. Examples of one Food Guide serving: 1 slice of bread, ½ cup (125 mL) of cooked rice, pasta; ¾ cup (175 mL) of hot cereal; 30 g of breakfast cereal.



### **Choose 2 servings of milk or fortified soy beverages each day**

(If you are 18 years old or less, add 1 or 2 extra servings of dairy products each day). Examples of one Food Guide serving: 1 cup (250 mL) of milk or fortified soy beverage; ¾ cup (175 g) of yogurt, 1 ½ oz (50 g) of hard cheese.



### **Choose 2 servings of meat and alternatives each day**

Examples of one Food Guide serving: 2 ½ ounces (75 g) of cooked fish, poultry, lean meat; ¾ cup (175 mL) of cooked legumes; 2 eggs, 2 tablespoons (30 mL) of peanut butter.

### **Breastfeeding women need more calories**

Include an extra 2 to 3 servings each day of foods from any of the above food groups. For example, have a fruit and a yogurt for a snack.

### **Supplements**

All breastfeeding women should take a multivitamin containing folic acid.

**See Canada's Food Guide for more examples of serving sizes and advice on choosing healthy foods: [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)**

- ★ When choosing foods from the 4 food groups, have those that are prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.
- ★ Drink water regularly, and even more in hot weather or when you are more active. Have water available when you are breastfeeding.
- ★ Limit your consumption of caffeine to a maximum of 2 cups of coffee per day.

### **Oils and Fats**

Include a small amount - 2 to 4 Tbsp (30 to 45 mL) of unsaturated fat each day. This includes oil used for cooking, salad dressings, margarine and mayonnaise. Limit butter, hard margarine, lard and shortening.

# **Questions Breastfeeding Mothers Often Ask**

## **1. Does what I eat affect my breastmilk?**

No, breastmilk is produced and maintained by the baby feeding regularly and well from the mother's breast. However, it is important that mothers have a healthy diet and lifestyle to ensure their own well being.

## **2. How do I know if I am producing enough milk? "My baby is so hungry and I feed so often. I don't think I have enough milk..."**

Newborns nurse 8 to 12 times a day. A mother produces as much milk as her baby wants. Some reassuring signs that your baby is getting enough milk are: swallowing during feeding, contentment after a feed and dirty or wet diapers after almost every feeding.

## **3. Can foods I eat cause my baby to have colic?**

Colic is frustrating and the breastfeeding mom often blames her diet as the culprit. It is unusual for a diet to be responsible for colic. Therefore, nutritious foods such as milk products, vegetables and fruit should not be eliminated from the diet without careful planning with a dietitian, doctor or nurse.

To receive the handout "Colic in the Breastfed Baby" call the Public Health Info Line at 613-580-6744.

## **4. Is it alright to go on a weight loss diet if I am breastfeeding?**

Not now; breastfeeding moms should not try to lose weight through strict dieting. Breastfeeding should help you gradually lose some of the weight you gained while you were pregnant. Sensible eating and exercise are the route to fitness for the breastfeeding mother.

***Enjoy this special time  
with your baby!***

