

## Six Healthy Eating Tips During Pregnancy

- **Aim for the 5 Food Groups:** Eat a variety of foods from the 5 food groups (grains, fruits, vegetables, lean protein, and dairy) to help ensure that your growing baby is getting all the nutrients it needs to be healthy.
  - ❑ 6 servings of grains (choose mostly whole grains). 1 serving equals: 1 slice of bread, 1 cup cold cereal, ½ cup hot cereal, ½ cup pasta/rice, 1 small tortilla (6”), ½ pita
  - ❑ 3 to 4 servings of fruit. 1 serving equals: 1 small fresh fruit (like apple or orange the size of a tennis ball), 1 cup berries or melon, ¼ cup unsweetened dried fruit
  - ❑ 4 to 5 servings of vegetables. 1 serving equals: ½ cup cooked vegetables, 1 cup of leafy green vegetables (like lettuce or spinach) or 1 cup raw vegetables
  - ❑ 5 to 6 servings of protein: 1 serving equals: 2 Tbsp. of natural peanut butter; ¼ cup unsalted nuts; ½ cup beans; 1 egg; 2 egg whites; 3 oz. of fish, seafood, meat, or poultry
  - ❑ 3 to 4 servings of dairy. 1 serving equals: 1 cup milk, 1 cup plain yogurt, 1 oz. of cheese
- **Get Enough Calcium, Iron and Folic Acid:**
  - ❑ **Calcium:** During pregnancy you need 1300 mg of calcium each day. Dairy products like milk, yogurt, and cheese are rich in calcium. Consider 3-4 servings from the dairy group each day. Other calcium sources include a handful of almonds or a cup of broccoli. You can also take a calcium/Vitamin D supplement. The vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium.
  - ❑ **Iron:** During pregnancy, your body has to make more iron-rich red blood cells to supply to your baby. If you don't get enough iron in your diet you may become anemic. Aim to have at least 3 servings of iron-rich foods like poultry, meat, fish, dried beans, and fortified cereals. Eating foods high in vitamin C (like oranges, bell peppers, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, and strawberries ) will help you absorb iron better.
  - ❑ **Folic Acid:** Folic acid is a B-vitamin (also known as folate) that helps prevent brain and spinal cord defects (also called neural tube defects). The recommendation is 400 to 600 micrograms during pregnancy. Your healthy eating plan should include foods that are good sources of folic acid such as cooked spinach (130 micrograms); fortified breakfast cereals (100 micrograms); enriched pasta (80 micrograms); avocado (50 micrograms); and beans (46 micrograms).
- **Think Mini Meals:** Eat smaller, more frequent meals and snacks. Try eating 4 to 6 smaller meals a day instead of 3 large meals to help relieve any heartburn and discomfort you may experience as your baby grows bigger. Carry healthy snacks in your handbag (cut fruit, unsalted nuts, whole grain crackers and raw veggies).
- **Hydrate:** Aim for 8-10 cups of water per day. Hydrating helps maintain energy and relieve constipation.
- **Fish:** It's good for you and the baby, as long as it is cooked (never eat raw fish/sushi). Fish high in mercury such as swordfish, shark, king mackerel, Ahi tuna and tilefish should be avoided. You can eat up to 12 oz. of low mercury fish/seafood a week like shrimp, salmon, Pollock, catfish and canned light tuna.
- **Foods to Avoid:** Unpasteurized milk or juice; unpasteurized cheeses (if the label says “pasteurized” it's safe to eat); unheated deli meats and hot dogs (if you eat these foods – heat until steaming hot); undercooked meats and poultry; undercooked eggs (sunny side up); raw fish or seafood (like raw sushi); refrigerated smoked seafood (salmon, herring, trout, etc.), and raw sprouts.

This content is provided for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. You should always consult your doctor or other qualified health provider if you have questions or concerns.