

# Tips for Breastfeeding Moms

*Making healthy food choices with regular physical activity will keep you healthy.*

## What's on Your Plate?

Before you eat, think about what and how much food goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. Over the day, include foods from all food groups: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods.

## Making Healthy Food Choices

- **Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.** Choose a variety, including dark-green and red and orange vegetables and beans and peas.
- **Make at least half your grains whole.** Choose whole grains in place of refined grains.
- **Switch to skim or 1% milk.** Choose fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products such as milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy beverages.
- **Vary your protein food choices.** Choose seafood, lean meat and poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
- **Use oils to replace solid fats where possible.**
- **Make choices that are low in "empty calories."**



**What are "empty calories"?** They are calories from added sugars and solid fats in foods. Some foods with empty calories:

- Candy
- Desserts
- Fried foods
- Ice cream
- Sugar-sweetened fruit drinks/tea
- Sweetened cereals
- Biscuits
- Hot dogs
- Soft drinks/soda

## Breast Milk: Your Baby's First Food



Doctors recommend feeding only breast milk for the first 6 months. Continue breastfeeding in addition to feeding solid foods until your baby is at least 1 year old or older.

- Breastfeeding helps form a special bond with your baby.
- Breast milk helps protect your baby from illness.
- Breastfeeding is also good for you. It lowers your risk for breast cancer and type 2 diabetes.

## What About Alcohol?

Be very cautious about drinking alcohol, if you choose to drink at all. You may consume a single alcoholic drink if your baby's breastfeeding behavior is well established—no earlier than 3 months old. Then wait at least 4 hours before breastfeeding. Or, you may express breast milk before drinking and feed the expressed milk to your baby later.

# Daily Meal Plan

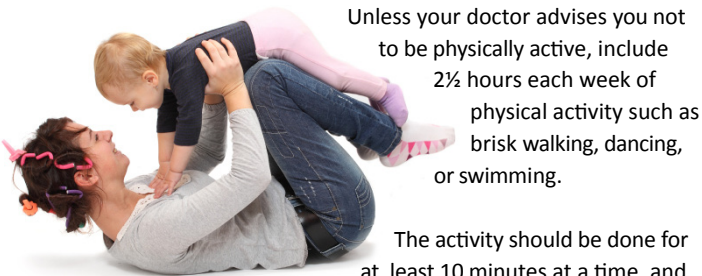
The Plan shows different amounts of food depending on how much of your baby's diet is breast milk. Moms who feed only breast milk to their baby need slightly more food. This is a general Plan. You may need more or less than the Plan.\*

Food Group	Breastfeeding only	Breastfeeding plus formula	What counts as 1 cup or 1 ounce?
Eat this amount from each group daily.*			
Vegetables	3 cups	2½ cups	1 cup raw or cooked vegetables or 100% juice 2 cups raw leafy vegetables
Fruits	2 cups	2 cups	1 cup fruit or 100% juice ½ cup dried fruit
Grains	8 ounces	6 ounces	1 slice bread 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal ½ cup cooked pasta, rice, or cereal
Dairy	3 cups	3 cups	1 cup milk 8 ounces yogurt 1½ ounces natural cheese 2 ounces processed cheese
Protein Foods	6½ ounces	5½ ounces	1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood ¼ cup cooked beans ½ ounce nuts or 1 egg 1 tablespoon peanut butter

\* If you are not losing weight you gained in pregnancy, you may need to cut back by decreasing the amount of "empty calories" you are eating.

Get a Daily Plan for Moms designed just for you.  
Go to [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) for your Plan and more.  
Click on "Pregnant & Breastfeeding Women."

## Being Physically Active



Unless your doctor advises you not to be physically active, include 2½ hours each week of physical activity such as brisk walking, dancing, or swimming.

The activity should be done for at least 10 minutes at a time, and preferably spread throughout the week.

## Also...

- **Your need for fluids increases while you are breastfeeding.** You may notice that you are thirstier than usual. Drink enough water and other fluids to quench your thirst.
- **Seafood can be part of a healthy diet.** Omega-3 fats in seafood have important health benefits for you and your baby. Salmon, sardines, and trout are some of the choices higher in Omega-3 fats.
  - Eat 8 to 12 ounces of seafood each week.
  - Eat all types of tuna, but limit white (albacore) tuna to 6 ounces each week.
  - Do not eat tilefish, shark, swordfish, and king mackerel since they have high levels of mercury.

Learn about other nutrition assistance programs:  
<http://www.benefits.gov/>