

# Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy



**Ohio**  
Department of Health

# Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy

*Dear Mom-to-be:*

*You want to have a healthy baby and keep yourself healthy, too. Eating right and getting health care helps you reach your goal. The WIC program helps you:*

- \* learn how to get health care and other services,*
- \* learn to make healthy food choices,*
- \* learn ways to keep your baby safe,*
- \* learn about breastfeeding, and*
- \* get benefits to buy healthy foods.*

*The tips in this booklet do not replace your doctor's advice. Talk with your doctor at your prenatal checkups. Write down questions to ask before you go.*

*When you pick up your WIC benefits, you can learn more about healthy eating. WIC has nutrition sessions for you and other moms to learn, share ideas, and ask questions. We hope you enjoy taking part in the WIC program.*

*Sincerely,*

*The WIC program staff*



# Get prenatal care.

**Prenatal care** is health care for pregnant women. A doctor or specially trained nurse checks that you and your baby are okay. Your prenatal checkups will likely be:

- ✿ One checkup each month for the first 6 months,
- ✿ Two checkups each month in the 7th and 8th months,
- ✿ One checkup each week in the 9th month, and
- ✿ One checkup 6 weeks after your baby is born (*postpartum*).

**Get prenatal care as soon as you think you are pregnant.** Go to all your checkups. You can learn more about your baby and how your body is changing.

If you need help to pay for prenatal care, ask WIC about Healthy Start and Healthy Families Medicaid, or call 1-800-324-8680 to find out more. The application can be found at <http://benefits.ohio.gov>



# Choose foods for you and baby, too.

- \* Your baby grows best when you eat right.
- \* Every day, eat foods from all five food groups.

## Grains

6 servings

My servings

## Vegetables

5 servings

My servings

## Fruits

4 servings

My servings

## Dairy

3 servings

My servings

## Protein

6 servings

My servings



<b>ONE SERVING IS</b>	<b>TIP</b>
<p>1 slice bread or tortilla            ½ bagel or hamburger bun            ½ cup cooked rice, noodles, or cereal            1 cup flake-type cereal</p>	<p>Eat whole grains like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Corn or whole wheat tortillas</li> <li>* Whole wheat or rye bread</li> <li>* Brown rice</li> <li>* Oatmeal</li> </ul>
<b>ONE SERVING IS</b>	<b>TIP</b>
<p>½ cup chopped or cooked            1 cup lettuce or other leafy greens            ½ cup vegetable or tomato juice</p>	<p>Eat many kinds and colors: dark green, orange, red, yellow, purple, and white.            Add to: scrambled eggs, rice, noodles, salads, and casseroles.</p>
<b>ONE SERVING IS</b>	<b>TIP</b>
<p>½ cup chopped or cooked            1 fruit – apple, orange, peach            ½ cup 100% fruit juice</p>	<p>Eat many kinds and colors: red, yellow, orange, blue, green, and white.            Put sliced or chopped fruit on cereal, pancakes, pudding, and frozen yogurt.</p>
<b>ONE SERVING IS</b>	<b>TIP</b>
<p>1 cup milk            1 cup yogurt            1 to 2 slices cheese</p>	<p>Buy low fat (1%) or fat free milk and low fat cheese.            If it is hard to drink milk, get ideas from WIC.</p>
<b>ONE SERVING IS</b>	<b>TIP</b>
<p>1 ounce of meat, chicken, turkey, or fish            ¼ cup canned light tuna            1 egg            ½ cup cooked beans or tofu            2 tablespoons peanut butter or nuts</p>	<p>A three ounce serving is the size of a deck of cards.            Eat more beans.            Ask WIC for recipes.            Choose lean meats. Bake, broil, or grill them.</p>



# Sample Menu

You and your baby do best when you eat regular meals. Here is an idea for one day.

## Breakfast

- ½ cup strawberries
- 1 egg scrambled with ¼ cup mushrooms and bell peppers
- 1 slice whole wheat toast
- 1 cup skim milk



## Morning Snack

- medium apple
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter

## Lunch

- Sandwich with 2 slices of whole wheat bread,
- 2 ounces cooked chicken breast, lettuce, and tomato
- 1 cup carrot and celery sticks
- ½ cup grapes
- 1 cup skim milk



## Afternoon Snack

- 1 cup trail mix (mixed nuts, dried fruit, and granola)

## Dinner

- 2 ounces roast beef
- ½ cup brown rice
- ½ cup broccoli
- 1 cup tossed salad with lite dressing
- 1 cup skim milk



## Snack

- 8 ounces low fat vanilla yogurt
- 2 graham crackers

Total servings for sample menu: 4 fruits, 5 vegetables, 6 grains, 6 protein and 4 dairy

# Snack Smart.

When you want a snack, have one of these:

- \* Grapes
- \* Low fat milk
- \* Apple slices or banana with peanut butter
- \* Cottage cheese
- \* Cheese slice on whole wheat tortilla
- \* Celery and carrot sticks
- \* Nuts and raisins
- \* Low fat yogurt
- \* Tomato juice
- \* Hard cooked egg
- \* WIC cereal



## Fast Food Tips

Choose these	Do not choose these
Grilled chicken sandwich	Crispy chicken or chicken nuggets
Single hamburger or cheeseburger	Double or triple hamburgers or cheeseburgers
Side salad	French fries
Pizza topped with vegetables	Pizza topped with pepperoni, sausage, extra cheese
Baked potato	Loaded baked potato
Fruit	Dessert
Water, low fat milk, or 100% juice	Soda pop or sweet tea

# Mini Meals

**If you don't feel like eating, try a mini meal.**

Pick a food from each group. You decide how much.

*Example:* Cold cereal + Low fat Milk + Apple

GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3
Bagel	Cheese	Apple
Baked potato	Cottage cheese	Banana
Whole grain bread	Frozen yogurt	Grapes
Cold cereal	Low fat milk	Melon
Crackers*	Milkshake	Orange
English muffin	Pudding	Peach
Graham crackers	Yogurt	Pineapple
Hamburger bun*	Beans/peas/lentils	Raisins
Noodles	Cooked chicken	Strawberries
Noodle soup	Cooked meat	Broccoli
Oatmeal or grits	Egg, hard cooked	Carrots
Pita bread	Egg salad	Green peppers
Raisin bread	Egg, scrambled	Raw spinach
Brown rice	Hamburger	Tomato
Roll*	Nuts (like walnuts)	Green beans
Tortilla*	Peanut butter	Vegetable soup



\*Make half your grains whole grains.

## Food safety tips

- \* Wipe countertops before fixing food.
- \* Wash your hands with soap and water before you eat or fix food.
- \* Wash vegetables and fruit with water before eating or cooking.
- \* Cook eggs, meat, chicken, turkey, fish, and seafood to the well-done stage. Use a meat thermometer.
- \* Cook hot dogs, cold cuts, and deli meats like bologna, salami, or ham until steaming hot before eating.
- \* If you eat fish one or more times a week, ask WIC or your doctor for more information.

## What about vitamins?

Your doctor will tell you to take a prenatal vitamin. It has extra iron and folic acid to help your baby grow. Take the pill with water. If it is hard to take, talk with your doctor. Do not take any other vitamins unless approved by your doctor.

## Keep your teeth healthy.

To keep your teeth and gums healthy, be sure to:

- \* Brush your teeth and tongue with fluoridated toothpaste at least two times a day.
- \* Floss your teeth at least once a day.
- \* Drink water or low fat milk instead of juice, fruit flavored drinks or soda pop.
- \* Get a dental checkup.

Use a soft-bristled toothbrush. Brush gently. If your gums bleed when you brush or floss, tell your doctor. Most dental work is safe throughout pregnancy.



# Be active for a healthy body.

## Your body stays fit when you move it.

If your doctor says it is okay, try to keep active. Walking and swimming are two ways. You will look and feel good because you:

- ✿ have more energy and feel less tired,
- ✿ sleep better,
- ✿ work off stress,
- ✿ tone your muscles, and
- ✿ have better posture.

## Find time to be active for 30 minutes, most or all days of the week.

You can break the time up like this:

- ✿ walk 10 minutes in the morning,
- ✿ walk 10 minutes after lunch, and
- ✿ walk 10 minutes after dinner.



# Weight Gain

▶ You need to gain weight so your baby grows right.

Before pregnancy you were: **Your recommended weight gain is:**

<b>Underweight:</b>	28-40 pounds
<b>Normal weight:</b>	25-35 pounds
<b>Overweight:</b>	15-25 pounds
<b>Obese:</b>	11-20 pounds

Ask your health professional how much weight you should gain.

First trimester gain should be 1-4 pounds for a single pregnancy.

After the 3rd month, you might gain about ½ to 1 pound a week. To keep a steady weight gain:

- \* Eat when you feel hungry.
- \* Choose healthy foods to eat.
- \* Drink water when you get thirsty.
- \* Keep active by walking.

If your weight gain is:

- \* Just right – Congratulations!
- \* Too little or too much – It can be harmful to you and your baby.

Notes

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# Keep your baby safe.

## Don't smoke.

If you smoke, your baby:

- \* may be born too small or too sick to live,
- \* may be at risk for crib death (SIDS),
- \* may be at risk for lung problems like asthma,
- \* may be at risk for more colds and ear infections, and
- \* may have behavioral issues and decreased intelligence.



**Get help to cut back or quit.** Talk with your doctor or call the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

## Don't drink beer, wine, liquor, or mixed drinks.

If you drink, your baby:

- \* may be born with birth defects, and
- \* may have health or learning problems for life.

Even a drink once in a while could hurt your baby. **Get help to quit.** Talk with your doctor or call Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) 1-877-275-6364 or check the website: [www.mha.ohio.gov](http://www.mha.ohio.gov).

## Don't use street drugs.

If you use drugs, your baby:

- \* may be born too small or too sick to live,
- \* may be born with birth defects, and
- \* may have health or learning problems for life.

**Get help to quit.** Talk with your doctor or call OhioMHAS 1-877-275-6364.

## Do not use:

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| * Crack/cocaine   | * PCP or Angel dust |
| * Speed or uppers | * LSD               |
| * Downers         | * Bath salts        |
| * Heroin          | * Meth              |
| * Marijuana       | * Any illegal drug  |

# Don't take medicine without your doctor's OK.

Before you take any medicine, **ask your baby doctor** if it is safe. Let your doctor know about all the medicines you take. Any medicine, even aspirin, laxatives, pain pills, or cold tablets could hurt your baby.

## **Don't take herbal supplements or drink herbal teas.**

Some herbs might hurt your baby. If you take herbs or drink herbal teas, ask your doctor if it is safe.

## **Some foods can make you sick or hurt your baby.**

### **Do not eat:**

- \* Tilefish, swordfish, king mackerel, or shark
- \* Raw oysters or fish like sushi or sashimi
- \* Rare or raw meat, chicken or turkey
- \* Deli meat spreads or patès
- \* Raw or soft-cooked eggs
- \* Feta, blue-veined, Brie, or Mexican-style (queso blanco or queso fresco) cheeses
- \* Unpasteurized (raw) milk or cheese
- \* Unpasteurized juice or cider
- \* Raw sprouts, like alfalfa sprouts
- \* Home made sauces made with raw eggs like Caesar dressings or mayonnaise
- \* Uncooked cookie or cake batters



# Pregnancy discomforts

Your body changes when you are pregnant. You might feel sick to your stomach the first 3 or 4 months. Some smells and foods might make you throw up.

## If you feel sick...

(Morning Sickness)

- \* Open the window to let fresh air in and stale air out.
- \* Get up slowly when you wake up.
- \* Stay away from smells that make you sick.
- \* Eat cold foods if the smell of food makes you sick.
- \* Eat any food that stays down.
- \* Eat small amounts of food every one to two hours.
- \* Drink liquids, but take small sips.

Even if you feel sick, you still need food and liquids. If you can't keep anything down, call your doctor.



As your baby grows, you might get an upset stomach when you eat. It might be hard to move your bowels (constipation). Talk to your doctor if you get these problems. Do not take medicine unless your doctor says to. Here are some tips:

### **If you have heartburn ...**

(Indigestion)

- \* Eat 5 to 6 small meals, not 2 or 3 large ones.
- \* Eat less fried or greasy foods.
- \* Eat less spicy foods.
- \* Drink small sips of water with your meals.
- \* Don't drink sodas, coffee, or tea with caffeine.
- \* Walk after you eat.

### **If you can't move your bowels:**

- \* Eat high fiber foods like:
  - \* Vegetables
  - \* Fruit
  - \* Beans
  - \* Whole grain cereal
  - \* Whole wheat bread and crackers
  - \* Whole wheat noodles
  - \* Brown rice
  - \* Corn tortillas
- \* Drink plenty of fluids like water.
- \* Walk after you eat.



# Give your baby the best start – Breastfeed!

## **Breastfeeding is the natural way to feed your baby.**

- \* Breast milk has the right ingredients in the right amounts to give your baby a healthy start. It is all your baby needs for the first 6 months.
- \* Breast milk is easy to digest and changes every day to meet baby's needs. Bowel movements are softer and easier to pass.

## **Breastfeeding is good for mom, too.**

- \* Mother's milk is always ready and at the right temperature.
- \* It helps you relax and feel close to your baby.
- \* Moms feel proud that their babies grow as a result of something only they can do!



# Did you know?

## Babies who do not get breast milk have more:

- \* Allergies and asthma,
- \* Illnesses and hospital stays,
- \* Earaches and colds,
- \* Diarrhea and constipation,
- \* Tooth decay, and
- \* Vision problems.

## Moms who do not breastfeed their babies may:

- \* Bleed longer after giving birth,
- \* Take longer to get back into shape,
- \* Have a higher risk of some types of cancers, and
- \* Have weaker bones as they get older.



# Breastfeeding Basics



**1. Nursing should not hurt.**

Your breasts might be tender for a few days, but this should pass. Learning the right way to put the baby to breast helps prevent problems. If you have discomfort, ask for help.

**2. A mom can make all the milk her baby needs.**

How much milk you make depends on how often your baby nurses, not on the size of your breasts. The more your baby nurses, the more milk you make.

**3. Nursing will not make breasts sag.**

Breasts change due to pregnancy.

**4. Nursing involves the whole family.**

Family members and friends can help take care of mom and baby. They can help with cooking and cleaning and bath, play, and cuddle time. Moms and babies need lots of love and support.

**5. Moms who nurse can eat their favorite foods!**

Your diet does not have to be perfect, and you do not have to avoid any foods!

**6. Babies can be nursed anywhere.**

WIC staff can teach you ways to feel comfortable when nursing around others.

**7. Moms can nurse if they go back to work or school.**

You can:

- \* Have the baby brought to you for feeding.
- \* Pump breast milk for feeding your baby.
- \* WIC staff can share tips to make breastfeeding work for you.

**8. Moms can nurse if the baby was born by C-section.**

The surgery and pain medicine do not affect how much milk is made.

**9. Most over-the-counter and prescription drugs are safe while nursing.**

Ask your doctor before taking any medicines including birth control.



# Hand Expression

Even moms who choose not to breastfeed may need to express milk by hand to relieve breast fullness.

## How to hand express:

1. Sit up and lean forward.
2. Gently massage your breast.
3. Place your thumb and index finger an inch away from areola in the shape of a C.
4. Press back into your breast and gently and firmly squeeze together. Release and repeat. Do not expect to see milk right away.
5. Keeping your fingers in a C, rotate your hand around your breast.
6. Hand express each breast until you are comfortable.



# Make time for yourself.

Being pregnant is hard work! At times you may feel tired and grumpy. You might even feel sad. Find time to relax and get some rest. If you feel overwhelmed, get help.

- ✿ Ask for help from family and friends.
- ✿ Find someone to talk to.
- ✿ Call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) at 1-877-275-6364 or check the website: [www.mha.ohio.gov](http://www.mha.ohio.gov).

Adapted from Maryland WIC's Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy

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