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for women & children

Nutrition for the mom-to-be



As soon as you become pregnant, you start receiving advice from all the mothers about what to eat and what not to eat. Some advice may be sound while the others may be unscientific. Eating for yourself and your baby is important for a healthy pregnancy.

Pregnancy creates unique nutritional demand on you as your baby totally depends on you for its nourishment. Hence, it is imperative for you to take the right quality and quantity of essential nutrients to fulfill your baby's nutritional requirements.

Each food group has something to offer your body. For example:

- Grains are a good source of energy.
- Fruits and vegetables are packed with antioxidants, fiber and water-soluble and fat-soluble vitamins.
- Meats, nuts and legumes provide your body with protein, folate and iron.
- Dairy products are great source of calcium and vitamin D.

Understanding what your body needs is the first step to eating healthy during pregnancy. The foods that you eat have a great effect on your body and help you to successfully endure through the journey of momhood.

The general rule that mothers should follow is to preferably eat 5 Times a day, that is three regular meals and two short meals or snacks. Some foods have certain nutritional value that can help your body to cope through the different stages, uneasiness and joys of pregnancy.

Including the following nutrients in your diet will satisfy your body's nutritional needs

Carbohydrates All carbohydrates are broken into glucose, the body's main fuel that powers all of its activities. There are two types – simple and complex.

a. Simple carbohydrates are digested and absorbed easily and are available in naturally sweet foods like Fruits, Sugar, Honey, Maple syrup.

b. Complex carbohydrates include dietary fiber and starch, takes long time to digest. Good sources of this can be found in Bread, Rice, Pasta, Starchy vegetables like potatoes, corns.. etc.

Fiber prevents constipation and also helps to maintain stable blood glucose. So complex carbohydrates are recommended.

Fats like omega 3 fatty acids play an important role in brain development, are essential for the function of immune system, aid in blood clotting and help your body use vitamin A,D,E,K.

- Fats should make 25-35% of your total food intake.
- Most of the fats should be unsaturated fats such as olive oil, peanut oil.
- Limit saturated fats such as butter, fatty red meats and avoid trans fats which have no nutritional value.



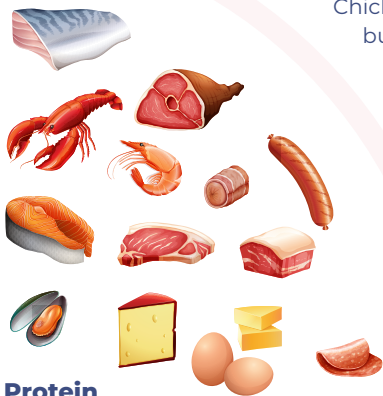
Non-starchy vegetables



Fruit

ur daily diet will help ensure that you al needs during pregnancy

Protein is critical for ensuring the proper growth of fetal tissue, including the brain. It also helps with breast and uterine tissue growth during pregnancy. It even plays a role in your increasing blood supply, allowing more blood to be sent to your baby. Good sources include: Lean meat, Beans, Chicken, Salmon, Nuts, Peanut butter, Cottage cheese.



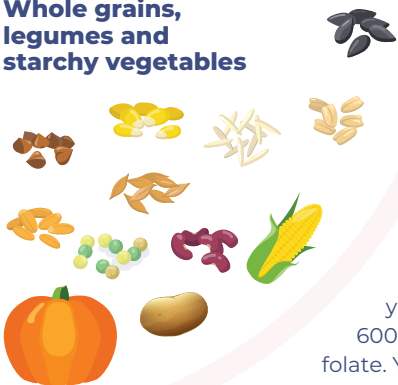
Protein

Calcium helps build your baby's bones and regulates your body's use of fluids. Good sources of calcium include: Milk, Yogurt, Cheese, Cabbage, Tofu, Eggs, Pudding.

Folate also known as folic acid, plays an important part in reducing the risk of neural tube defects.

These are major birth defects that affect the baby's brain and spinal cord, such as spina bifida and anencephaly. When you're pregnant, you need 600 to 800 micrograms of folate. You can get folate from these foods: Liver, Nuts, Dried beans and lentils, Eggs, Nuts and peanut butter, Dark green leafy vegetables.

Whole grains, legumes and starchy vegetables



Iron works with sodium, potassium, and water to increase blood flow. This helps ensure that enough oxygen is supplied to both you and your baby. You should be getting 27 milligrams of iron per day. Good sources of this nutrient include: Dark green leafy vegetables, Citrus fruits, Enriched breads or cereals, Lean beef and poultry, Eggs, Dried fruits.

Food products to be avoided:

Alcohol, oily foods, excessive tea or coffee, preserved or packaged Juice and carbonated drinks.

Avoid the intake of sugary foods as they increase in blood sugar levels which may lead to gestational diabetes.



Cravings and food dislikes:

During pregnancy, many women experience a strong dislike to particular foods. They may also have cravings for at least one type of food.

Common cravings during pregnancy include: Chocolate, Spicy foods, Fruits, Comfort foods, such as mashed potatoes and pizza. It's fine to give into these cravings sometimes, especially if you crave foods that are a part of a healthy diet. However, you should try to limit your intake of junk food and processed foods.

Food dislikes may only be problematic if they involve foods that are important for the baby's growth and development. Talk to your nutritionist if you have adverse reactions to foods you should be eating during pregnancy. Your nutritionist can suggest other foods or supplements to compensate for the lack of certain nutrients in your diet.



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This is general information issued in public interest.
Please contact your doctor for more details.