

# Healthy eating

your prescription for pre-pregnancy, pregnancy and breastfeeding

NUTRITION

Date

 /  / 

Woman's name

- Eat plenty of fruit, vegetables and wholegrain cereals. Each day aim to eat:**  
 serves of vegetables     serves of fruit     serves of cereals (wholegrain)

- Increase your folate**  
 eat plenty of folate rich foods  
 take one 500 microgram tablet of folate/day from now until you are 3 months pregnant  
 other tablet (please specify)

- Eat plenty of iron rich foods**  
 lean red meat     chicken     fish     wholemeal cereals  
 baked beans     legumes     eggs     green leafy vegetables

- Increase iodine in your diet**  
 seafood     low-fat cow's milk     bread baked with iodised salt     take one 100-200 microgram tablet of iodine each day

- Eat plenty of calcium rich foods**  
 low-fat milk drinks     low-fat yoghurt     hard cheese     soy milk with calcium

- Drink plenty of fluids especially water**  
 aim for 9 glasses or more, every day  
 drink water instead of fruit juice, soft drinks, cordial or sports drinks

- Limit your intake of caffeine to less than 250 milligrams per day**

- Limit the amount of high mercury fish you consume**

- Minimise the risk of listeriosis and toxoplasmosis**

- I recommend you read the Pregnancy Lifescripts Guide to Healthy Eating**

- I would like to review your progress in**  **weeks**     **To assist you with healthy eating I refer you to**

Signature



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# Healthy eating

## Example meal plan for a healthy diet in pregnancy

NUTRITION

This suggested meal plan or guide is not intended to be a weekly menu. To increase food variety, choose from different wholegrain breads and cereals, fruits and vegetables in season and lean meats, chicken, fish and legumes. There is an allowance of 15 grams a day of poly or mono unsaturated fats, oils and spreads—choose salt reduced brands.

### Beverages

Aim for 2 litres of fluids daily—mainly water, with some low-fat milk or juice.

### Breakfast

- ▶ Wholegrain breakfast flakes or muesli with low-fat milk and/or low-fat yogurt and banana or dried fruit **OR**
- ▶ Wholegrain bread or grain fruit bread or toast with 1 teaspoon margarine
- + One or more of: low-fat hard cheese, egg, peanut butter, baked beans, asparagus, mushroom or tomato
- + Glass of low-fat milk, or fruit or vegetable juice

### Lunch or light meal

- ▶ Wholegrain bread with salad and canned tuna or salmon **OR**
- ▶ Wholegrain toast with baked beans, tomato and low-fat hard cheese **OR**
- ▶ 1 cup vegetable soup and wholegrain toast or roll **OR**
- ▶ Vegetable omelette with side salad and wholegrain toast
- + In season fruit
- + Glass of low-fat milk, water

### Main meal

- ▶ Lean lamb, beef, chicken or pork roast with jacket potato and steamed vegetables—pumpkin, spinach, beans, corn **OR**
- ▶ Beef, chicken or fish stir fry with rice and almonds and green vegetables—broccoli, beans **OR**
- ▶ Curried lentil casserole with chick peas, wholegrain rice and side salad
- ▶ Canned apricots or peaches with low-fat yogurt or custard **OR**
- ▶ Fresh fruit salad
- + Glass of water

### Nutritious snacks throughout the day

Multigrain crackers or crisp bread with vegetables, low-fat hard cheese, salmon or tuna **OR**  
Fresh, canned or dried fruit **OR** Fruit bread **OR** Unsalted nuts **OR** Low-fat yogurt **OR**  
Low-fat milk, may add flavouring **OR** Fruit smoothie.



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# Guidelines for healthy eating

## during pre-pregnancy, pregnancy and breastfeeding

**Eating well during pregnancy means both you and your baby will be healthier, stronger and more able to cope with stress. Good food does not have to be expensive or complicated, just varied.**

Breastfeeding provides the best nutrition for your baby and is good for the health of both you and your baby. A healthy, balanced diet that meets your nutritional needs during breastfeeding is very important. As breastfeeding increases the amount of energy used by your body, it is a good way to help you return to your pre-pregnant state.

### Tips to increase fruit, vegetable/legumes and cereal intake

- ▶ During pregnancy, each day aim to eat:
  - 5–6 serves vegetables/legumes and
  - 4 serves fruit and
  - 4–6 serves of cereal
- ▶ During breastfeeding, each day aim to eat:
  - 7 serves vegetables/legumes and
  - 5 serves fruit and
  - 5–7 serves of cereal
- ▶ Eat vegetables and fruit at breakfast (e.g. baked beans, tomatoes or mushrooms on wholegrain toast; add fruit and nuts to breakfast cereals).
- ▶ Frozen or canned vegetables are an alternative to fresh vegetables.
- ▶ When choosing cereals, select wholegrain options such as wholemeal breads and crisp breads, high-fibre breakfast cereals, oatmeal, wholemeal pasta, brown rice and popcorn.

1 serve of vegetables = ½ cup cooked vegetables (e.g. broccoli, carrot, or mixed vegetables); or ½ cup cooked legumes; or 1 small potato; or 1 cup of salad.

1 serve of fruit = 1 medium-sized apple, banana, orange or pear; 2 small apricots, kiwi fruit or plums; 1 cup diced pieces of canned fruit; ½ cup juice; 4 dried apricot halves; or 1 ½ tablespoons sultanas.

1 serve of wholegrain cereal = ½ cup muesli, one cup porridge; 1 ½ cups of breakfast cereal; 1 cup cooked rice, pasta or noodles; or 2 slices bread.

### Tips to get enough folate

- ▶ Eat foods rich in folate (e.g. asparagus, spinach, brussel sprouts, oranges, bananas, strawberries and legumes) or artificially enriched with folate (e.g. some breakfast cereals and breads).
- ▶ Ask your general practice team about folate supplements.
- ▶ For most women, a folate supplement of 500 micrograms/day is recommended from 1 month before conception and for the first 3 months of pregnancy.
- ▶ If you have had a previous pregnancy with, or family history of, neural tube defect OR are on anti-epileptic medication, your GP may recommend a higher dose of folate (5000 micrograms/day).

### Tips to increase your iron intake

- ▶ During pregnancy and breastfeeding, each day aim to eat 1 ½–2 serves of iron-rich foods.
- ▶ Eat a variety of foods rich in iron each day (e.g. lean red meat, egg, wholegrain breads and cereals, legumes and green leafy vegetables).
- ▶ Always have food rich in Vitamin C (e.g. orange juice, capsicum, broccoli, tomatoes) when eating iron-rich foods. Vitamin C aids the body's absorption of iron.

1 serve = 65–100 grams lean meat or chicken; 80–140 grams fish; 2 eggs; or ½ cup of baked beans.

### Tips to increase your iodine intake

- ▶ The best source of iodine is seafood. However, be aware of risks involved with eating fish with high mercury levels or uncooked or smoked seafood.
- ▶ Other sources include bread baked with iodised salt, cow's milk and canned salmon.
- ▶ Using additional iodised salt in your diet or herbal supplements containing sea weed and kelp is **not** recommended.
- ▶ Ask your GP team about iodine supplements.

### Tips to increase calcium

- ▶ During pregnancy and breastfeeding, each day aim to eat 2 serves of calcium rich foods.
- ▶ Eat cereal with low-fat milk and low-fat yogurt or put low-fat cheese on sandwiches).

1 serve of calcium rich foods = 40 grams hard cheese; 200 grams yoghurt; 1 cup milk; or 1 cup calcium-fortified soy product. Alternatives include canned fish with bones, nuts, green leafy vegetables and wholegrain cereals.

### Tips when eating fish

- ▶ It is important that you continue to eat fish while you are planning a pregnancy and when you become pregnant.
  - ▶ Fish is an excellent source of protein and iodine. It is low in saturated fats and high in omega-3 fats which are good for brain development and function and for cardiovascular health.
  - ▶ It is safe for all women to eat 2–3 serves per week of most types of fish (e.g. tuna or salmon).
  - ▶ You should limit servings of orange roughy (deep sea perch) or catfish to 1 serve/week with no other fish consumed that week.
  - ▶ You should limit servings of shark fish (flake), swordfish/broadbill or marlin to 1 serve/fortnight with no other fish consumed that fortnight.
  - ▶ Do not eat uncooked fish (e.g. raw tuna, sushi or sashimi), smoked mussels, smoked fish or oysters.
- 1 serve of fish = 150 grams.

**Quality information is available from the following sources:**

Food Standards Australia New Zealand: [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)  
 Australian Government Healthy Eating Information: [www.healthyactive.gov.au/healthyweight](http://www.healthyactive.gov.au/healthyweight)  
 Dietitians Association of Australia: [www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au)  
 Australian Breastfeeding Association: [www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)  
 Nutrition Australia: [www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)  
 Health Insite: [www.healthinsite.gov.au](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au)

### Tips to increase your water intake

- ▶ Drink water instead of soft drink, cordial, sports drinks or fruit juice.
- ▶ During pregnancy and breastfeeding, do not have more than 250 milligrams/day of caffeine.
- ▶ Approximate caffeine guide:
  - instant coffee 60–80 milligrams/cup
  - brewed coffee 60–140 milligrams/cup
  - tea 10–50 milligrams/cup
  - energy drinks 80 milligrams/can
  - Coca Cola™ 48.75 milligrams/can
  - milk chocolate 20 milligrams/100g bar
- ▶ The safest option for your baby is to avoid any alcohol. Please talk to your general practice team for support and information.

### Tips to reduce your risk of infection with listeria and toxoplasma

- ▶ Listeria and toxoplasmosis are two germs which can cause serious illness in unborn children.
- ▶ Listeria is a bacteria found in contaminated meat, fish and dairy products. Toxoplasma is a parasite which is found in raw meat and cat faeces.
- ▶ Both infections can be reduced by using good food handling techniques, including washing hands after handling raw meat and before eating; cooking foods, especially meat, thoroughly; washing fruits and vegetables well to remove traces of soil; and washing cooking implements and cutting boards thoroughly. Limit contact with cats and litter trays.
- ▶ Avoid high-risk foods such as cold sliced meats, cold cooked chicken, pate, uncooked or smoked seafood, leftover foods, pre-prepared coleslaw and salads, soft serve ice-cream and soft cheeses (e.g. brie, blue, camembert, feta and ricotta).
- ▶ Read the brochure 'Listeria and food: Advice for people at risk', available at the Food Standards Australia New Zealand website.

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