

What to eat when Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is an important time to consider your diet and nutritional intake. Focus this time on providing optimal nutrition for yourself and your precious little one so that you can both meet your daily requirements and enjoy quality time. Maternal intake of fatty acids, Vitamin A, B6, B12, folate, iodine and selenium are important for levels within breastmilk. Choosing foods that contribute to quality milk production whilst providing the energy for motherly demands, form the basis of these eating guidelines. These dietary guidelines may be modified as your requirements change.

What can I get out of it?

- Nourishing breastmilk providing beneficial fats and nutrients for babies brain development and growth
- Less reaction from baby to the foods you are eating
- More consistent energy levels
- Healthy, regular bowel movements and digestion
- Healthy, balanced weight and body composition
- Balanced hormones
- A positive mood and greater capacity to handle stress

In a nut-shell - What is involved?

A largely plant-based diet (lots of colourful fruits and vegetables) with the addition of lean protein (mainly fish white meats and lean red meat), whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, filtered water and herbal teas. Certain foods have a reputation for increasing milk production. Thick, grain based soups and warm porridges are used throughout the world to encourage more milk, as is traditional chicken soup. You may also consider slow cooked meats on the bone if you have lost significant blood in childbirth.

Key areas to focus on

- Hydration: Choose filtered water as your predominant drink, aiming to drink 1.5 – 2L per day. If you have a particular chair that you nurse in, ensure you keep a bottle of water close to that chair. Automatically drink water whilst your baby feeds.
- Eating regularly: feeding and nourishing you is as important as for your baby
- When you have time to prepare foods make more than a few days' at a time, and freeze
- Make vegetables the main part of your meal rather than starchy carbohydrates
- Carrot and celery sticks make an excellent quick snack if you haven't prepared anything else
- Prepare nutrient dense snack foods for time poor days, these can include basic one pot soups of vegetables and legumes ready in the fridge or freezer, slow cooked meals prepped in the morning for the day, protein balls, milk production cookies, boiled eggs, homemade sushi or nut mixes.
- Choose healthy fats, such as extra virgin olive oil and nuts & seeds rather than deep fried foods, biscuits or snacks to assist with losing baby weight
- Keep meat intake to a palm-size per meal.
- Don't be shy about asking for help. Contact family, friends, local mothers groups and the Australian Breastfeeding Association for support

Why is it good to eat this way? What the science tells us

- Maternal diets rich in fruits and vegetables, fish and vitamin D containing foods are associated with less allergy in offspring
- Lactation places high demands on maternal sources of energy, protein and other nutrients, so keep yourself nourished with good nutrient-dense foods.



<i>Include</i>	<i>Limit/ Avoid</i>	<i>Other notes/ comments</i>
PROTEINS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bake, poach, slow-cook, steam or grill. ▪ Make up large batches and freeze for time poor days. ▪ Invite family to bake casserole for freezing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organic &/or free range poultry: Eggs, chicken, turkey. ▪ Seafood: salmon, cod, mackerel, sardines, snapper, barramundi, other white fish, mussels, oysters. ▪ Red Meat: Choose lean, grass fed Australian meats. ▪ Vegetarian: Lentils, beans, chickpeas, tofu, tempeh, other unprocessed soy, quinoa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ . ▪ Duck and pork. ▪ Seafood: tuna (Max. 3 x wk) prawns, crab, lobster, squid/ calamari. 	
COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mix up your sources of complex carbohydrates and combine with legumes if having vegetarian meals. ▪ Try and avoid quick sugar hits and snacks in an attempt to increase energy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brown rice, basmati rice, rolled oats/porridge. ▪ Wholegrain wheat, spelt or rye bread. Sourdough made from these ingredients is a good choice. ▪ Wholegrain, spelt or buckwheat pasta; 'zoodles' or veggie pasta, spaghetti squash. ▪ Others – oats, millet, quinoa, buckwheat, amaranth, barley, wholegrain cous cous. ▪ Crackers – brown rice cakes, corn thins, ryevita, spelt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jasmine rice (GI very high) ▪ White bread, fruit breads e.g. raisin toast ▪ Normal 'white' pasta. ▪ Others – Commercial cereals (eg. special K, Coco Pops, Just Right etc). ▪ 'White' crackers or crispbreads (e.g. Saos, cruskits, premiums etc) 	
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aim to consume 4 – 6 cups of vegetable per day (measured raw). ▪ Steaming or stir frying or slow cooking is a good way to cook. ▪ Fruit is a great way to grab snacks on the go. Limit to 2-3 serves a day. ▪ A vegetable and fruit smoothie (more veg than fruit) is a great way to improve quick nutrition
<p>Choose a colourful rainbow of veggiess that are fresh, seasonal and organic if possible (local farmer's markets are great).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greens: Spinach, rocket, silver beet, kale, broccoli, zucchini, asparagus, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, bok choy, celery, green beans, watercress, seaweed ▪ Salad veggies: cucumber, avocado, tomato, olives, lettuce, capsicum, snow peas, sprouts, radish. ▪ Others veggies: beetroot, carrot, squash, pumpkin, sweet potato, cauliflower, peas, eggplant, mushrooms, onion. ▪ Berries: blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, mulberries, cranberries, goji berries. ▪ Other fruits: apple, banana, oranges, mandarins, lemons, limes, watermelon, peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots, cherries, paw paw, figs, grapefruit, passionfruit, pears. ▪ Fermented vegetables like sauerkraut 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep frozen and tinned/canned as a backup rather than your first choice. ▪ Limit dried fruits. ▪ Choose sweet potato over white potato. 	
NUTS, SEEDS, OILS AND FATS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Choose unroasted and unsalted nuts & seeds. ▪ Aim to consume ¼ - ½ cup of nuts per day. ▪ Always have a snack container of nuts in your baby bag
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nuts – almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, macadamias, pistachios, pecans, peanuts, coconut. ▪ Seeds – sesame, chia, sunflower, pepitas, poppy, flax, hemp. ▪ Nut/seed butters – organic peanut butter, almond butter, ABC spread, tahini. ▪ Oils – extra virgin olive, sesame, avocado, coconut, flaxseed, ▪ Fats – organic butter, ghee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 'Honey roasted' or candied nuts. ▪ Tamari almonds – have as a treat. ▪ Commercial nut butters – too much sugar and salt. ▪ Vegetable oil (soybean, canola, sunflower, palm oil). ▪ Margarine, animal fats. 	
DAIRY AND DAIRY ALTERNATIVES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make up a batch of milk production cookies or protein balls for quick wholesome treat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Milk - Full cream organic, A2 milk; unsweetened almond, coconut or soy milk; goats or sheep milk. ▪ Yoghurt – full – fat Greek yoghurt. ▪ Cheese – goat and sheep cheese, white cheeses (ricotta, feta and other soft cheeses), small amounts of parmesan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited amounts of rice milk. ▪ Skim milks, flavoured milks. ▪ Flavoured, 'diet' or fat-free yoghurts. ▪ Yellow cheeses ('singles', cheddar, tasty, Swiss, mozzarella etc.) 	
TREATS, SPREADS AND CONDIMENTS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treats: cacao-based chocolate, dark chocolate, bliss balls. ▪ Hummus, guacamole, tamari. ▪ Herbs and spices, Himalayan, sea or rock salt. ▪ Balsamic or apple cider vinegar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Added sugar, cakes, lollies, biscuits, ice-cream, chocolate. ▪ Commercial spreads (e.g. vegemite, Nutella, etc. sauces and syrups. ▪ Limit honey – it's mostly just sugar 	



