

GUIDE FOR A HEALTHY PREGNANCY



Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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MY TO DO LIST

- Make appointments with my doctor
- Write down questions for my doctor and WIC
- Ask WIC about breastfeeding
- Start eating healthy WIC foods
- Sign up for Text 4 Baby™

YOUR PREGNANCY AND WIC

You're expecting a new baby. There is so much to think about and do to get ready! If you're like most moms-to-be, having a healthy baby is always on your mind. Your doctor should be number one on your list for health advice. The answers you need could be different from what worked for your sister or best friend. So always go to the source.

Get news you can use. WIC can support your pregnancy in so many ways. When your next benefits are due, you may go to group sessions or work with WIC staff one-on-one. At these visits, you get health tips, share ideas, ask questions, and get information to help your pregnancy go smoothly.

What kind of information will I get?

- Getting the most from your WIC benefits
- Learning to breastfeed your baby
- Focusing on how to make smart food choices
- Keeping your baby safe
- Connecting with health care providers, dentists, and other services to keep you and your baby healthy

There's a lot to learn before your baby is born, even if this is not your first baby. Your friends and family will tell you that each pregnancy is different, just like each baby.

Many women tell WIC that writing down their questions before each doctor's visit helped them to **remember important things.**



YOUR IMPORTANT NUMBERS FOR A HEALTHY PREGNANCY

Get prenatal care soon and often. Having a baby is the most natural thing in the world. But check in regularly with your health care provider to be sure things are going well. A doctor or nurse who is specially trained to take care of you while you are pregnant will check that you and your baby are okay. They can answer your questions about how your baby is growing and how your body is changing. They will also catch any problems early, and work with you to manage them so all goes well.

HOW MANY PRENATAL CHECKUPS DO I NEED?

- 1** **checkup** each month for the first **6** months
- 2** **checkups** each month in months **7** and **8**
- 1** **checkup** each week in month **9**

Most pregnant women have a test for gestational diabetes between **24** and **28** weeks of pregnancy

HOW LONG SHOULD MY PREGNANCY LAST?

Your baby needs at least **39 weeks** to grow and develop before birth. If you have signs of labor before then, call your doctor right away.

What if I can't afford prenatal care?
Ask WIC about the
Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP).
To learn more, call
1-800-456-8900

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN I AM IN LABOR?

5 common signs of labor include:

- 1** **Regular or frequent contractions** – a tight feeling in your uterus that may not hurt
- 2** **Cramps that feel like your period**
- 3** **Increased pressure on your pelvis or vagina** – like your baby is pressing down
- 4** **Low, dull backache**
- 5** **Increased leaking or bleeding from your vagina**



HOW MANY CHECKUPS DO I NEED AFTER MY BABY IS BORN?

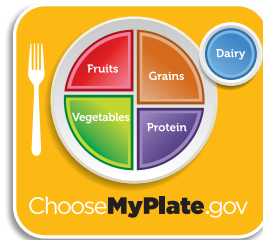
1 **checkup** about **6** weeks after your baby is born.

This is a great time to talk to your doctor about your future pregnancy plans and birth control options.

YOUR BODY GROWS BEST WHEN YOU EAT WELL

Choose foods for you and your baby, too.

Each of the 5 food groups offers different things you need. Try to eat from each of these food groups every day. It's okay if you eat more than one serving of a food at some meals and none at another meal.



GRAINS

— 6 servings

- 1 slice bread or 6-inch tortilla
- 1/2 bagel or whole wheat bun
- 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice, or noodles
- 1 cup cold cereal

At least half the grains you eat should be whole grains, like oatmeal, brown rice, or corn or whole wheat tortillas, or bread. They help you reduce constipation and manage your weight.

VEGETABLES

— 5 servings

- 1/2 cup raw or cooked vegetables
- 1/2 cup vegetable or tomato soup
- 4 ounces vegetable or tomato juice
- 1 cup fresh salad greens

Eat many kinds and colors. Dark green or orange vegetables are rich in vitamin A. Enjoy them every day to keep your eyes and skin healthy and protect against infections.

FRUITS

— 4 servings

- 1/2 cup fruit
- 1 apple, orange, or peach
- 4 ounces 100% fruit juice

Have a vitamin C fruit every day like oranges, berries, melons and WIC juices. Vitamin C helps you absorb more iron from other foods.

PROTEIN

— 6 servings

- 1/4 cup meat, chicken, turkey, or fish
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup beans or tofu
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons nuts

Meat, chicken, turkey, fish, and beans give you lots of iron to keep your blood strong. Beans and lentils are very low in fat.

DAIRY

— 3 servings

- 8 ounces nonfat or 1% milk
- 1 cup lowfat yogurt
- 1-2 slices lowfat cheese

Dairy foods offer calcium and potassium to build strong bones and teeth and lower blood pressure.

If it is hard to drink milk, get ideas from WIC.

FATS, OILS, & SWEETS

Add a little healthy fat like olive or canola oil, avocados, nuts, and seeds. They keep your cholesterol low. But they are high in calories. Just 5 or 6 teaspoons a day is enough.



4 WAYS TO CHOOSE HEALTHY FOODS

1 Eat three meals and three snacks throughout the day.

That's the best way to keep your energy up, and your weight gain on target. Here is an example, using all the food groups.

You can get the most of these foods with your **WIC benefits.**

BREAKFAST

- Cereal + lowfat milk + walnuts
- Whole wheat toast + peanut butter
- Banana
- Orange juice

MORNING SNACK

- Plain lowfat yogurt
- Berries or pineapple chunks

LUNCH

- Chili with beans
- Shredded lowfat cheese
- Corn tortilla
- Lettuce
- Tomato
- Avocado
- Water

AFTERNOON SNACK

- Celery sticks + apple wedges + peanut butter

DINNER

- Baked chicken
- Brown rice
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Lowfat milk

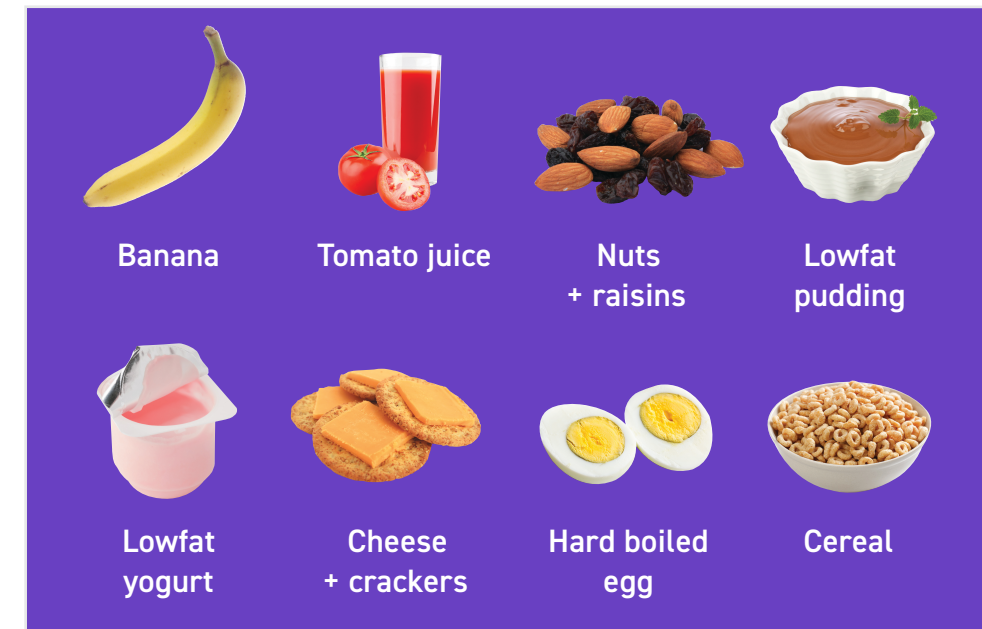
EVENING SNACK

- Fruit salad



2 Snack smart.

Hungry between meals? For healthy weight gain, pick a favorite from the five food groups, like one of these:



3 Get good food on the go.

Your life is really busy, and it doesn't slow down just because you're pregnant. When you're out and about and need a quick meal, ask about the calories in your favorite foods. Fast food shops must give you that information. These are most likely to be good choices:

- Grilled chicken sandwich with lettuce and tomato
- Single hamburger or cheeseburger with a side of coleslaw
- Main dish salad or side salad
- Pizza slice topped with green peppers, tomatoes, and mushrooms
- Fruit
- Water, lowfat milk, or 100% juice

WHAT CAN'T I EAT?

4 Try mini meals.

Most women have morning sickness sometime in the first three months of pregnancy. Other women feel there is little room left for food right before their baby is born. At other times they're just too tired to cook. If you don't feel like cooking or eating very much, try a mini meal.

Pick a food from each food group in the chart below. Mix and match your favorites. You decide how much.

GRAINS	DAIRY & PROTEIN	FRUITS & VEGETABLES
Bagel	Lowfat cheese	Apple
Baked potato	Cottage cheese	Banana
Cold cereal	Frozen lowfat yogurt	Grapes
Crackers	Lowfat milk	Melon
English muffin	Milkshake	Orange
Graham crackers	Lowfat pudding	Peach
Whole wheat bun	Lowfat yogurt	Pineapple
Noodles	Canned beans	Raisins
Noodle soup	Cooked chicken	Strawberries
Oatmeal or grits	Cooked meat	Broccoli
Pita bread	Hard boiled egg	Carrots
Raisin bread	Egg salad	Green peppers
Rice	Hamburger	Raw spinach
Roll	Nuts (like walnuts)	Tomato
Whole wheat bread	Peanut butter	Tomato soup
Corn or whole wheat tortilla	Sunflower seeds	Vegetable soup

ARE THERE THINGS I CAN'T EAT WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

Yes. When you are pregnant, your immune system does not fight germs like it did before.

It is best not to eat certain foods, see the list to the right. These can hurt you and your baby.

CAN HEALTHY FOOD MAKE ME AND MY BABY SICK?

Even healthy food can make you and your baby sick if germs come along for the ride. Follow these steps to keep your food safe.

- Wash your hands with soap and water before you eat or fix food.
- Wash vegetables, fruit, and all bagged, pre-cut vegetables and fruit with water before eating or cooking.
- Cook meat, chicken, turkey, fish, and seafood to the well-done stage.
- Cook hot dogs, cold cuts, and deli meats like bologna 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.

Some foods to **AVOID** while pregnant:

- Raw or rare meat, chicken, or turkey
- Raw or soft-cooked eggs
- Deli meat spreads or patés
- Unpasteurized raw milk
- Unpasteurized juice or cider
- Raw sprouts, like alfalfa sprouts
- Cheese made from raw milk including feta, blue-veined cheese, Brie, or Mexican style (queso blanco or queso fresco)

IS IT SAFE?

CAN I TAKE VITAMINS WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

Yes. Take the prenatal vitamins your doctor recommends. They have extra iron and folic acid to help your baby grow. Take the pill with water. If this is hard for you, talk to your doctor about other choices. If it upsets your stomach, take it at night before you go to bed.

Ask your doctor if you should take a 150 microgram (mcg) iodine supplement.

Talk to your doctor before you take any other supplements.



WHAT ABOUT HERBAL TEAS AND HERBAL SUPPLEMENTS?

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

IS IT SAFE TO TAKE MEDICINE WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

Talk to your doctor about any medicine before you take it. Many are safe, but even aspirin, laxatives, or cold tablets could hurt your baby.

I'VE HEARD FISH IS GOOD FOR ME. IS IT SAFE WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

Some fish is very good for both you and your baby. It can keep your heart healthy and help your baby's eyesight and brain develop properly. But some seafood can hurt your baby.

Always **AVOID** these while you're pregnant:

- Tilefish, swordfish, king mackerel, or shark
- Crab mustard
- Raw fish like sashimi or sushi made from raw fish

IS IT SAFE TO SEE A DENTIST WHILE I AM PREGNANT?

Yes. Get a dental checkup every 6 months. To keep your gums and teeth healthy, be sure to:

- Brush your teeth at least 2 times a day with a soft toothbrush.
- Floss your teeth 1 time a day.
- Tell your doctor if your gums bleed when you brush or floss.
- Drink water, not sugar sweetened drinks.
- If your gums are swollen, rinsing with salt water may help them feel better. Mix 1 teaspoon of salt with 1 cup of warm water. Rinse your mouth. Spit out the rinse.
- If you vomit with pregnancy, rinsing with baking soda solution can help protect your teeth. Mix 1 teaspoon of baking soda with 1 cup of warm water. Rinse your mouth. Spit out the rinse.

If you have diabetes, or pre-diabetes, be sure to talk to both your doctor and your dentist. People with diabetes get oral health disease more easily, and oral health disease can make your diabetes harder to manage.

Reminder: The Maryland Medicaid Dental Program provides coverage for children under the age of 21, to former foster care adults up to the age of 26, and to pregnant women until 6 weeks after the date of delivery.

Get more information on dental care at:

www.healthyteethhealthykids.org

Select oral health during pregnancy > during pregnancy

To locate free or low cost dental care near you, click the **Find a Dentist** button at the top right, or visit: phpa.health.maryland.gov/oralhealth

HOW MUCH WEIGHT SHOULD I GAIN?

IS IT SAFE TO EXERCISE WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

Your body stays healthy and fit when you move it. If your doctor says it is okay, try to be active for 30 minutes a day. Walking works well when you're pregnant. Some women do it this way.

Walk 10 minutes after **breakfast** after **lunch**, and after **dinner**



WHAT ABOUT VACCINATIONS WHILE I'M PREGNANT?

Talk to your doctor about getting these safe vaccinations while you are pregnant.

What: Tdap Vaccine

When: After you are 20 weeks pregnant.

Why: It protects you from getting pertussis, also known as whooping cough, and passing it on to your infant after birth. It also helps protect your baby while he is too young to get the shot himself. You will also pass on this immunity when you breastfeed your baby. Pertussis is very dangerous for babies.

Protect your baby from anyone who could pass on **Whooping Cough**. Have dad, grandparents, caregivers, and friends get a pertussis vaccination at least two weeks before meeting your baby.

What: Flu Vaccine, the inactivated type.

When: Before or during flu season, while you are pregnant.

Why: Getting the flu while pregnant can lead to serious problems, even hospitalization. Like Tdap, it protects your baby until he is old enough for his own vaccination.

While pregnant, many women are hungry most of the time.

But forget the old wives' tale. You are not "eating for two" adults. Your baby is small, so you only need to eat a little more than before you were pregnant. Your doctor will tell you how much weight gain is right for you.

When	Then
You gain too much weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's hard to lose the weight after the baby is born
You don't gain enough weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your baby can be born too small or too soon
You gain the right amount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your baby grows well You can lose the weight after your baby is born.



Try to get your weight gain **just right**.

Eat **only** when you feel hungry.

Eat **healthy foods**, like the ones you get from **WIC**.

Drink **water** when you get thirsty.

Keep **active** by walking.

Based on your **BMI**, your recommended weight gain is _____.

GETTING COMFORTABLE

Being pregnant is hard work. As your baby grows and your body changes, you may be uncomfortable. You might feel sick to your stomach the first 3 or 4 months. This can happen almost any time of the day. Some smells and foods might make you throw up. You might have an upset stomach after you eat. It might be hard to move your bowels. Talk to your doctor about these problems before you take any medicine.

HERE ARE SOME COMFORTING TIPS FROM OTHER MOMS:

"Morning" Sickness

Open a window to let in fresh air.

Get up slowly in the morning.

Avoid smells that make you sick.

Eat cold foods instead of hot since cold foods don't smell as much.

Eat any food that stays down.

Eat small amounts of food every one or two hours.

Take small sips when drinking liquids.

Indigestion

Nibble 5 or 6 small meals, not 2 or 3 large ones.

Avoid fried, greasy, or spicy foods.

Drink small sips of water with meals.

Avoid sodas, coffee, caffeine and mint.

Go for a walk after meals instead of lying down.

Wear loose-fitting clothing.

Raise the head of the bed higher than the foot.

Constipation

Drink more fluids, especially water.

Go for a walk after eating.

Choose more high fiber foods like vegetables, fruit, beans, and whole grain cereal, brown rice, or whole wheat bread or tortillas.

Even if you feel sick, you still need food and liquid.

If you can't keep anything down, call your doctor.

GIVE YOUR BABY THE RIGHT START: BREASTFEED!

Mother's milk is the normal way to feed your baby. Mother's 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. Mother's milk is easy to digest. Bowel movements are softer and easier to pass.

Breastfeeding is good for mom too. Nursing is convenient. Mother's milk is always ready and at the right temperature. Moms find that nighttime feedings are easy. It saves time – there is no mixing formula or cleaning bottles. There is less to pack up when you go out. Nursing saves money – you don't need to buy formula or bottles.



DID YOU KNOW?

Babies who do not get mother's milk may have more:

- allergies
- illnesses and hospital stays
- diarrhea and constipation
- tooth decay

Moms who do not breastfeed their babies may:

- bleed longer after giving birth
- take longer to get back into shape
- have a greater risk of some types of cancers
- have weaker bones as they get older

8 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 your breasts sag.** Breasts change due to pregnancy, not breastfeeding. Wearing a supportive bra during pregnancy and breastfeeding may help.
- 4 Nursing involves the whole family.** Family members and friends can help with the baby at bath time, diaper change, and playtime. They can help with household chores. Babies need lots of love and cuddling other than at feeding time.
- 5 Moms who nurse can eat their favorite foods!** You don't need to avoid any foods or follow a special diet. It is important to drink enough liquids so you are not thirsty.
- 6 Babies can be nursed in public if moms choose to.** Maryland law allows you to breastfeed anywhere that you have the right to be. If you would like to nurse without anyone knowing, place a blanket over your shoulder to cover your baby. WIC breastfeeding staff can give you other suggestions.
- 7 You can nurse if you go back to work or school.** You can have the baby brought to you for feeding. Or, nurse when you and baby are together, and leave mother's milk or formula for caregiver when apart.
- 8 Moms can nurse if the baby is born by a C-section.** The surgery and pain medicine do not affect the amount of milk you make.



DID YOU KNOW?

Most over-the-counter and prescription medicines are safe while nursing. You should still tell the baby's doctor about any medicine you are taking, even birth control pills.

Caffeine can make your baby fussy. When you drink coffee, tea, or cola sodas, caffeine gets into breast milk. It is best to choose caffeine-free drinks so your baby remains calm.

Alcohol gets into mother's milk. It is best to avoid beer, wine, mixed drinks, and liquor. If you have questions, ask your baby's doctor or a breastfeeding counselor.

Nicotine from cigarettes passes into mother's milk. It is best if you can quit smoking. If you can't quit, you can still nurse if you:

- Cut back on smoking as much as possible.
- Do not smoke when in the room with baby.
- Smoke just after breastfeeding instead of before or during a feeding.

Mothers who use illegal drugs should NOT breastfeed and should stop using drugs. Get help to quit. Talk with your doctor or call **1-800-662-HELP**.

If a mother or her partner is HIV-positive or has AIDS, she should NOT breastfeed. If you think you have AIDS or are at risk for it, get tested. Free testing is available at any Maryland health department. Call **1-800-358-9001** to find out more.

TAKE CARE OF YOU

Make time for yourself. Having a baby is hard work. During your pregnancy you may feel tired and grumpy. Try to relax and get some rest. If you're feeling overwhelmed ask your family and friends for help. You might even feel sad. Talk to your doctor about these feelings. And remember, always talk to your doctor before you start or stop medications.

Untreated depression can be hard on you.
Call **1-800-944-4PPD** to get help day or night.

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU MADE IT!

Now what? As soon as possible after delivery, call your WIC clinic to make an appointment for you and your baby.

If your baby is breastfeeding, you will receive the largest WIC food package and breastfeeding support.

If your baby leaves the hospital on a special formula, be sure the baby's doctor gives you a completed and

accurate WIC Medical Documentation form. Your doctor can get it from www.mdwic.org in the Health Care Providers section.



* Trust your instincts, always get medical attention if you are not feeling well or have questions or concerns.

* If you can't reach your healthcare provider, call 911 or go to an emergency room.

WHAT DO I PACK IN MY HOSPITAL BAG?

- Camera
- Car seat
- Diaper bag (including diapers, blanket and burp cloth)
- Flat shoes
- Going home clothes
- Going home outfit for baby
- Headband or ponytail holder and brush
- Insurance info
- Light reading
- Lip balm
- Maternity bra and nursing pads
- Maternity underwear
- Pajamas
- Pen and paper
- Personal items (i.e. toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant)
- Robe or sweater
- Sanitary napkins
- Socks
- Sugar-free hard candy or lozenges
- My Breastfeeding Checklist from WIC

MY WIC TO DO LIST

Be sure to take the following items with you to your next WIC appointment:

- Your ID
- Your baby
- Baby's identification card (crib card, etc.)
- Proof of address
- Proof of income



1-800-242-4942 | www.mdwic.org



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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
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3. email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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