

GUIDE FOR A HEALTHY NEW MOM



Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



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MY TO DO LIST

- Make my 6 week checkup appointment
- Make my baby's next checkup appointment
- Write down questions for my doctors
- Ask my doctor about folic acid
- Sign up for Text 4 Baby™

NEW MOMS AND WIC

Congratulations on your new baby! This is an exciting time as you get to know your little one. There is much to learn about taking care of yourself and your infant. Most new moms have many questions. Your doctor and your baby's pediatrician are your most important sources for your health concerns. You'll get answers to your questions that are just right for you.

WIC can support your new family in so many ways. When you receive your WIC benefits, 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 for taking care of yourself and your baby.

What kind of information will I get?

- Breastfeeding support to help you feed your baby
- Learning ways to keep your baby safe
- Working on ideas for how to get the most with your WIC benefits
- Focusing on how to make smart food choices
- Connecting with health care providers, dentists, and other services

This guide has tips to keep you and your baby healthy. Let us know how we can help you.

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



HEALTHY MOM, HEALTHY BABY

Take care of YOU. Babies need healthy, happy moms. There will be many appointments for your baby. Usually, a new mom needs just one, but it is an important one. As busy as you are, be sure to make an appointment with your doctor for 6 weeks after your baby is born. **If you had gestational diabetes, ask about a follow up test.** Being pregnant was hard work. This is your chance to check your recovery. You can learn ways to stay healthy, and find out when you will need your next check up.

Pay attention to your moods. Most new moms get the blues. They cry, feel sad, and have mood swings. The blues can last up to 2 weeks. If the feelings get worse, or last longer than 2 weeks, you could have postpartum depression. Postpartum depression is a medical condition that can be treated and cured.

Have you had any of these symptoms for more than 2 weeks?

- Feeling very sad or cranky
- Crying all the time
- Not eating or can't stop eating
- Not sleeping or wanting to sleep all the time
- Not wanting to take care of yourself
- Not enjoying life
- Not caring about your baby
- Feeling that you could hurt yourself or your baby
- Being afraid to be alone with your baby
- Worrying too much about your baby

Untreated depression is hard on you, your baby,
and your family. The sooner you start treatment,
the faster you get better.

Talk to your doctor or call **1-800-944-4PPD** to get help.

Adjusting to a new baby is not easy. Babies need a lot of attention. Sometimes moms forget that they need health care, too. One of the most important things you can do for your baby is make sure you both get the health care you need.



Stay up to date with shots. Shots keep you and your baby safe from diseases like measles, polio, pertussis (whooping cough), flu, and tetanus.

- Your baby will have most shots by 2 years old. Some shots are after that. Ask your doctor what you and your child need.
- Shots work best when you get them on time. The doctor will say when to get them.
- It is easy to forget which shots you and your child have gotten. Keeping a shot record for you and your child helps everyone remember. When your child is due for shots, take the record to the doctor. Take the record to WIC when they ask you to do so.

Protect your new baby. Have family and friends get **flu and pertussis shots** at least two weeks before they meet your baby. Dad, too!

Know your HIV status. You can get a free HIV test at any Maryland health department. Call **1-800-358-9001** to find out more.

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.

Keep your teeth healthy. The health of your mouth can affect you and your baby.

Brush your teeth at least **2** times a day, especially before bed.

Floss your teeth once a day.

Get a **dental checkup** every **6** months.

Drink water, not sugar sweetened drinks.

Eat fruits and vegetables.

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

What you need to know about safe sleep.

More than 10 babies a day die due to sleep problems.

To protect your baby, be sure your baby sleeps:

- alone (even twins, triplets, or more) near parents.
- on his back, head uncovered, no pillow or blanket, wearable blanket only.
- in an empty crib with:
 - narrow slats, without drop sides
 - firm mattress, fits snugly
 - mattress too low for standing
 - no bumpers, wedge, or sleep positioner
 - no toys, mobiles or crib gyms.
- not in a car seat, stroller, swing, bouncy seat, infant carrier, or sling.
- not near a window, curtains, blind/shade cords, or electric wires.



Take time to decide if another child is right for you.

Let's say you decide that you do want another child. Doctors say you should wait until your baby is at least 18 months old before trying to get pregnant again.

Babies that are born too close together are at risk for:

- Being born too early
- Low birth weight
- Learning or growth delays
- Other problems

Talk to your doctor about which birth control method might be right for you. Be sure to ask about folic acid too.

For more information and benefits about the Family Planning Program, go to: marylandhealthconnection.gov/health-coverage/family-planning-program/

Make time for yourself. Everybody wants to help with the new baby. Let them. Let family and friends shop, cook, clean and change diapers. Talk to someone. Enjoy your new baby, but take care of you, too!

Take 5

Try this stress reliever.

.....
Sit in a comfortable chair.
.....

Rest your hands on your stomach.
.....

Slowly breathe in through your nose for a count of 5.
.....

Hold for 1 second.
.....

Slowly breathe out through your mouth for a count of 5.
.....

Repeat 5 to 10 times.



[Give yourself **time to recover** from your pregnancy!]

WHY IS FOLIC ACID IMPORTANT?

Whether you plan to have another baby or not, you might.

Half of all pregnancies are not planned. Get folic acid every day—before you get pregnant again.

Folic acid is a vitamin. It helps prevent birth defects in a baby's brain and spine. However, it only works if you take it **before you get pregnant.** These birth defects happen during the first 28 days of pregnancy—before most women even know they are pregnant. If you can get pregnant, be ready.

Most women need 400 micrograms (mcg) every day. To get this much, **take a vitamin pill or eat fortified cereal.** Talk with your doctor about the best way to get folic acid.

Foods with folic acid are good for you too. They give you other vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Eat them even if you take a vitamin pill or eat fortified cereal.

These foods provide the most folic acid:

- Enriched or fortified bread, cereal, pasta, macaroni, noodles, and rice
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Orange juice made from frozen concentrate
- Lentils, black-eyed peas, and beans like kidney, black, and great northern
- Nuts, peanuts, and seeds



Check the label. Nutrition and supplement labels carry information that will help you to make the best choices.

Fortified cereal should give you 100% of the Daily Value for folic acid. This means it has 400 mcg of folic acid.

Your vitamin pill should have 400 mcg of folate.

Nutrition Facts	
About 13 servings per container	
Serving size 6 crackers (30g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories	120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 3.5g	4%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 20g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 0g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 30mg	2%
Iron 0.7mg	4%
Potassium 120mg	2%
Folate 200mcg DFE (120mcg folic acid)	50%

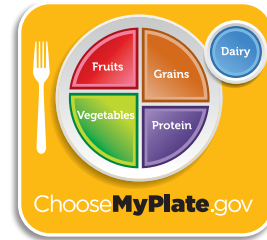
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Supplement Facts		
Serving Size 1 Tablet		
	Amount Per Serving	% Daily Value
Vitamin A (as retinyl acetate and 50% as beta-carotene)	1500 mcg	100%
Vitamin C (as ascorbic acid)	60 mg	100%
Vitamin D (as cholecalciferol)	10 mcg (400 IU)	100%
Vitamin E (as dl-alpha tocopheryl acetate)	20.1 mg	100%
Thiamin (as thiamin mononitrate)	1.5 mg	100%
Riboflavin	1.7 mg	100%
Niacin (as niacinamide)	20 mg	100%
Vitamin B ₆ (as pyridoxine hydrochloride)	30 mg	100%
Folate	400 mcg DFE (240 mcg folic acid)	100%
Vitamin B ₁₂ (as cyanocobalamin)	6 mcg	100%
Biotin	30 mcg	100%
Pantothenic Acid (as calcium pantothenate)	10 mg	10%

Get folic acid every day
—before you get pregnant again.

YOUR BODY HEALS BEST WHEN YOU EAT WELL

Eating regular meals helps you heal faster and have more energy. 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

— at least 7 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.

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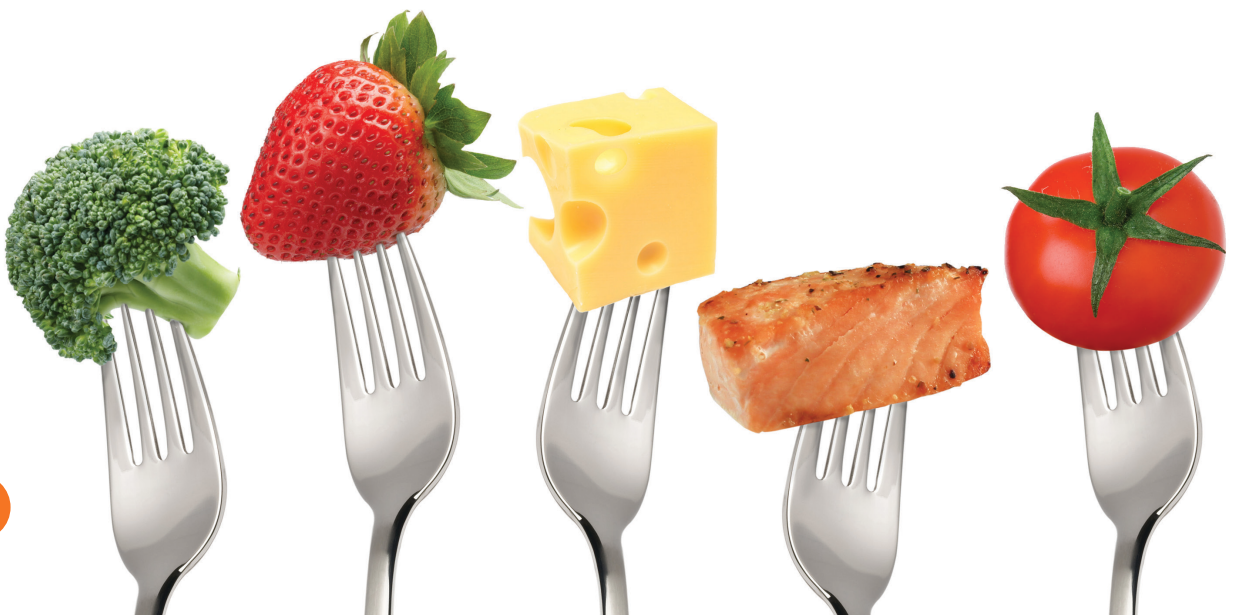
VEGETABLES

— at least 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.

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FRUITS

— at least 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.

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PROTEIN

— at least 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

— at least 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.

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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.

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QUICK AND EASY HEALTHY MEALS

In the beginning, try mini meals. When you're feeding a new baby every two or three hours, night and day, there is little time for cooking. So try mini meals to meet your needs for food, rest, and loving your baby. Just snack on healthy, easy to eat foods from all the food groups.

Below are simple suggestions for easy to fix and eat foods. Pick your favorite combinations from the groups below. You'll probably come up with ideas of your own, too.

GRAINS	DAIRY & PROTEIN	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
Bagel	Lowfat cheese	Apple	Broccoli
Brown Rice	Cottage cheese	Banana	Carrots
Cold Cereal	Lowfat yogurt	Grapes	Celery
Crackers	Lowfat milk	Orange	Bell Peppers
English muffin	Canned salmon	Peach	Spinach
Graham crackers	Light tuna	Pineapple	Tomatoes
Whole wheat bun	Sardines	Raisins	Tomato soup
Noodles	Canned beans	Strawberries	Vegetable soup
Noodle soup	Cooked chicken	Fruit juice	Salsa
Oatmeal or grits	Hard boiled egg	Plum	Salad greens
Pita bread	Hummus	Pear	Frozen vegetables
Raisin bread	Hamburger	Mango	Canned vegetables
Roll	Nuts (like walnuts)	Papaya	Lettuce
Whole wheat bread	Peanut butter	Dates	Yellow squash
Corn or whole wheat tortilla	Sunflower seeds	Avocado	Zucchini

As your baby gets older, get back to breakfast, lunch, dinner and healthy snacks. Soon you will get used to life with your baby. Your meals can get into a more regular pattern. They can still be simple and healthy. Here is an example.

When you eat well, your children eat well.

Breakfast

- Scrambled egg + lowfat cheese + salsa + whole wheat tortilla
- Peach
- 100% fruit juice

Lunch

- Turkey + sliced avocado + whole wheat bread
- Carrot sticks
- Apple
- Lowfat milk
- Oatmeal raisin cookie

Afternoon Snack

- Lowfat milk
- Whole wheat crackers
- Peanut butter

Dinner

- Spaghetti + meat sauce
- Mixed green salad + quartered tomato
- Whole wheat bread
- Lowfat milk

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



Get good food on the go. Your life is really busy. Be smart about fast foods. Look for these healthy choices when you need a quick meal.



Make fast foods at home. It's amazing how many uses there are for a bag of frozen mixed vegetables.

Make a stir fry

- 1 Cook and drain the vegetables
- 2 Add cooked chicken or meat
- 3 Serve over cooked brown rice

Use your leftovers

- 1 Cook and drain the vegetables
- 2 Add cooked macaroni and cooked beans or meat
- 3 Toss with your favorite salad dressing

Make a pot of soup

- 1 Cook the vegetables
- 2 Add chopped tomatoes, rinsed canned beans, water, and your favorite seasonings

BEING ACTIVE WILL HELP YOU LOOK AND FEEL GOOD

tone your muscles

Start with a 5 or 10 minute walk

work off your pregnancy weight

take it easy at first

have **more** energy and feel **less** tired

reduce stress

Talk to Your Doctor



KEEP YOU AND YOUR BABY SAFE

You and your child can get hurt from tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and other drugs. If you get pregnant again, your baby could be born too small or too sick to live.

Stay away from tobacco and e-cigarettes. Tobacco smoke can:

- Make your child have more colds and ear infections
- Lead to asthma or make it worse
- Lead to cancer, heart disease, or stroke

Set a **“No Smoking”** rule: **no one** can smoke around your child.

Avoid alcohol and other drugs.

Alcohol and drugs can ruin your body and mind. You might forget to take care of your baby.

Never leave your child with people who **drink too much** or **use drugs.**

Other medicines are drugs too.

Avoid misuse of medicines. Be sure to follow directions.

Get help to quit:

Talk with your doctor.

Call the Maryland Tobacco Quit Line at **1-800-QUIT NOW.**

Call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Administration Helpline at **1-800-662-HELP.**

These illegal drugs can hurt you and your baby:

- ⊗ Speed, Methamphetamines, or Crystal Meth
- ⊗ Crack/Cocaine ⊗ Marijuana or Weed ⊗ Opiates
- ⊗ Heroin or Dope ⊗ PCP or Angel Dust
- ⊗ LSD or Acid ⊗ Ecstasy or Molly ⊗ Mushrooms

KEEP YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN HEALTHY – BREASTFEED

DID YOU KNOW?

Babies who are not breastfed may:

- Have more diarrhea and constipation
- Have more allergies
- Get sick more often
- Have a greater risk of crib death (SIDS)

Moms who do not breastfeed may:

- Spend more money on food for baby
- Take longer to get back into shape
- Be more likely to get certain cancers

Babies who drink mother's milk love it and it comforts them!

It is easy to digest and is always ready to feed.

Moms of all ages can breastfeed.

Moms who have small or large breasts, or have C-sections can nurse.

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

Just because you didn't breastfeed this time, doesn't mean you can't do it the next time. If you tried breastfeeding but stopped, try it again if you have another baby. It is different with each baby. If something did not go right, ask for help next time. Often moms are doing fine but no one lets them know.

Even if you are not breastfeeding now, **plan to breastfeed** if you have another baby.



8 TIPS FOR BREASTFEEDING

It is great that you are breastfeeding. Breastfeeding gives your baby the best start and is good for you, too.

1 Breastfeeding is natural but it may take time and practice.

You and your baby are learning in the first 3 weeks. It gets easier after that.

2 Get your rest.

You will have more energy for your baby.

3 Drink water when you are thirsty.

Sip while you nurse your baby.

4 Eat 3 meals and at least 1 snack each day.

Some snack ideas are lowfat cheese and crackers, lowfat yogurt, fruit, cereal, nuts and raisins, or a sandwich.



5 If you don't drink milk, talk to WIC.

You can get some calcium from other foods like lowfat cheese, lowfat yogurt, and orange juice with calcium, other foods fortified with calcium, tofu (made with calcium), kale and collard greens.

6 Take 150 mcg iodine supplement each day.

7 Go to a breastfeeding support group where you can talk with other moms.

8 Call WIC or the lactation consultant at the hospital if you have questions.

* 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.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You did it! Stay healthy for you and your family.

- Get folic acid every day
- If you have a health problem, get it under control
- Get up to date on your shots
- Eat right and stay active
- Don't drink, smoke, or use drugs. Call **1-800-662-4357** for help with substance abuse.
- For information on preparing for a healthy pregnancy see www.marchofdimes.com
- To find a local family planning clinic near you, go to www.marylandhealthconnection.gov/health-coverage/family-planning-program/
- Sign up for Text 4 Baby™ Text Baby (Bebé for Spanish) to 511411 for weekly updates
- If you had gestational diabetes, get tested for diabetes every 4 to 12 weeks after your baby is born.

MY WIC TO DO LIST

- Take my ID to every WIC clinic visit
- Take my eWIC card and Shopping List to the grocery store
- Ask for breastfeeding help
- Ask WIC about my feeding questions
- Stay with WIC until my child turns 5



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



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2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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