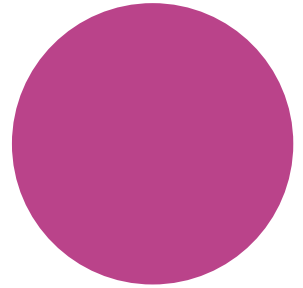
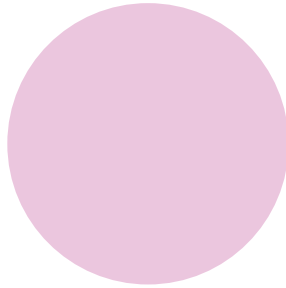
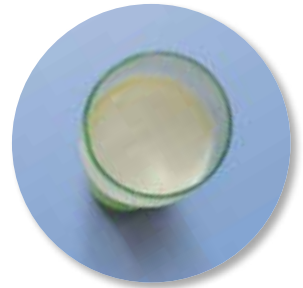
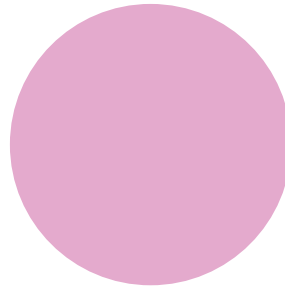
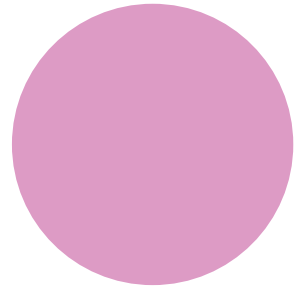
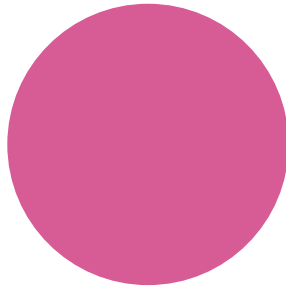
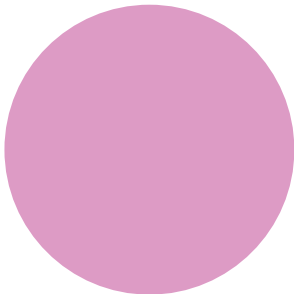
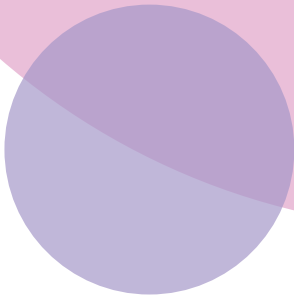
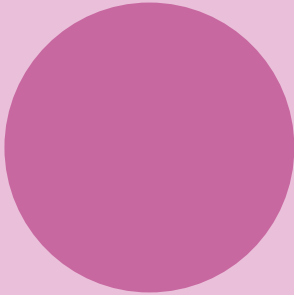


Eating well for new mums



Eating well for new mums



Dr Helen Crawley

FIRST STEPS NUTRITION TRUST



ISBN 978-1-908924-46-9 (e-book)
ISBN 978-1-908924-42-1 (hard copy)
Published by First Steps Nutrition Trust.
First edition: 2014.
Second edition: 2017.
Updated in 2020.

A PDF of this resource is available on the First Steps Nutrition Trust website www.firststepsnutrition.org

The text of this resource, and the photos, can be reproduced in other materials provided that the materials promote public health and make no profit, and an acknowledgement is made to First Steps Nutrition Trust.

This resource is provided for information only and individual advice on diet and health should always be sought from appropriate health professionals.

First Steps Nutrition Trust

Studio 3.04
The Food Exchange
New Covent Garden Market
London SW8 5EL
E: helen@firststepsnutrition.org
Registered charity number: 1146408

First Steps Nutrition Trust is a charity which provides evidence-based and independent information and support for good nutrition from pre-conception to five years of age. For more information, see our website www.firststepsnutrition.org

Acknowledgements

First Steps Nutrition Trust would like to thank Jean Crawley for funding the production of this resource.

The first and second editions were written by Dr Helen Crawley, who also updated the resource in 2020. Thanks go to Erica Hocking for help with recipes and food styling. The photos were taken by Helena Little.

First Steps Nutrition Trust would also like to thank all the organisations and individuals who commented on the first edition of this resource, and is very grateful for all the very helpful suggestions and corrections made to the original version. We would particularly like to thank Sarah Weston for original work on this report, as well as Fiona Bayne, Rosemary Brown, Helen Gray, Diana Hawdon, Clare Jones, Beckie Lang, Emma Pickett, Annie Seeley, Sally Tedstone and Diana West.

Edited by Wordworks.
Design by Sally Geeve.

Contents

About this guide	4
Eating well for new mums	6
Eating well for everyone	8
Top tips for eating well	14
What does eating well look like for new mums?	16
Ideas for healthy snacks and drinks	18

Breastfeeding and eating well 43

Breastfeeding	44
Eating and drinking well when breastfeeding	45
Special diets	51
Frequently asked questions	52

Additional information 57

Good sources of vitamins and minerals	58
For more information	60
Index	64

About this guide

With so much information available advising people what to eat, it can be difficult to work out what eating well really means. New mums may have lots of questions about how they can ensure they and their family can eat well. All new mums need to eat well for their own health now and in the future, and to make sure they are nutritionally ready for any future pregnancy. The human body is designed to breastfeed babies, and a special diet is not needed for women to breastfeed. All new mums should eat well whether they breastfeed or not. This resource, *Eating well for new mums*, provides examples of easy, nutritious snacks for busy mums, and information on what eating well means for them. It complements the information in the First Steps Nutrition Trust resource *Eating well for a healthy pregnancy*.

Why have we produced this resource?

The aim of this guide is to provide information to health workers so they can support new mums to eat well. After having a baby, many women find it takes some time to adjust to becoming a mother. It is very easy for mothers to overlook their own needs when their baby needs frequent changing, feeding, settling, bathing and play. Just as a baby needs round-the-clock care, a new mum's body is also working round the clock – to produce breastmilk if you are breastfeeding, to ensure you have the energy to cope with busy days and nights, and to recover from childbirth itself. Young mums may still be growing too, and have additional needs to support their own health. Eating a good diet will help all new mums feel good, will help with recovery, and help them manage the physical and emotional demands of parenting.

The example menu plans on pages 16-17 show what a good diet might look like for women in their child-bearing years. It is particularly important that mums who plan to have another baby make sure they are nutritionally ready for another pregnancy. For more information on *Eating well for everyone*, see page 8.

Who is this guide for?

This guide has been written for health workers who support new mums in a professional or voluntary capacity.

We hope that it will be of interest to policy makers, commissioners and managers in health and well-being boards, GPs, midwives, health visitors, those who support families in children's centres and other early years settings, and all those interested in promoting better public health for all.

Extra information for breastfeeding mothers can be found on pages 43-55. There are a lot of myths around diet and breastfeeding and we hope that this section will support and encourage everyone who breastfeeds, and dispel some of the misinformation about eating and breastfeeding.



The first 1,000 days ...

The first 1,000 days – that is, the nine months of pregnancy and the first two years of the baby’s life – is a critical window of opportunity to get food and nutrition right so that everyone can reach their full potential. It is never too late to eat better, and it is not expensive, or complicated to offer tasty and nutritious food to everyone.

For support and advice on how to eat well in pregnancy, see our resources *Eating well for a healthy pregnancy: A practical guide*, and *Eating well in pregnancy: A practical guide to support teenagers*. These are available at www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-in-pregnancy. For advice on how to ensure children eat well in the first two years of life, see the *For more information* section on page 60.



FIRST STEPS NUTRITION TRUST



First Steps Nutrition Trust is a charity that provides evidence-based practical resources to explain what eating well looks like. We aim to support families from pre-conception to when their children are 5 years of age, and we work within Government public health policy guidelines. We are wholly independent and take no commercial funding, and our work is open access so that anyone can use it to promote good public health, or to help them to eat better themselves. To find out more about the work we do, see www.firststepsnutrition.org

Eating well for new mums

The early weeks and months of a baby's life can be both exciting, tiring and fulfilling, and an anxious time for new families. Whether it is a first baby or parents have been through this experience before, new parenthood can be overwhelming. It is important that a new mum looks after herself as well as her baby, and that includes eating well.

The good news is it is never too late to start eating better, and eating well is not complicated, expensive or dull. This resource will provide lots of ideas for how to eat well across the day and where to get lots of good recipes, and provides photos and recipes for nutritious snacks to help you support new mums.

We hope that new families have had lots of support and advice from the health professionals looking after them during pregnancy and after the birth. There is also lots of support available to new families about infant feeding, and we give details of national breastfeeding helplines on page 60. Midwives, health visitors and children's centres can signpost new families to local infant feeding support. Breastfeeding mothers may have questions about what to eat or not eat when breastfeeding, and you can find answers to lots of frequently asked questions on pages 14 and 52.

Want to know more about breastfeeding?

You can find *Breastmilk and breastfeeding: A simple guide* at www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-infants-new-mums

For details of other resources about breastfeeding and organisations that offer support and advice, see page 60.

Want to know more about formula feeding?

First Steps Nutrition Trust provides simple information for families on formula feeding, and you can download *Infant milks: A simple guide to infant formula, follow-on formula and other infant milks* at www.firststepsnutrition.org/parents-carers

Supporting postnatal mental health

Some new mums (and dads) feel overwhelmed or low after the birth of a baby. It is very important that new parents talk to their health visitor, midwife or GP if they feel low following the birth of a baby. Information on postnatal depression can be found at www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/mental-health-problems-pregnant/ For other organisations that can offer support and help, see page 63.

Healthy Start and Best Start Foods

Healthy Start in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Best Start Foods in Scotland, are welfare food schemes which provide eligible pregnant women and young families with vouchers for foods and free vitamins. Both schemes have eligibility criteria, but the two schemes differ. More people are eligible in Scotland based on income criteria, but families in Scotland are only eligible for help until their child is 3 years of age, compared to 4 years in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Also the food voucher value is higher in Scotland, is a digital card, and can be used to buy plain fresh, frozen and canned fruit and vegetables (where no salt or sugar is added), dried or canned pulses (in water), cows' milk, first infant formula or eggs. Changes to the Healthy Start scheme mean that canned and dried pulses and canned fruit and vegetables (where no salt or sugar is added) can also be purchased alongside plain fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables, cows' milk and first infant formula. The Healthy Start scheme is also being digitised and it is

currently planned that, by October 2021, all eligible families will be able to access a card they can use wherever electronic payments can be made. Both schemes offer vitamins for pregnant women and new mums, and for infants and young children. For more information about both schemes, the foods that can be purchased, eligibility criteria and how the vitamin schemes differ, see the report *Healthy Start and Best Start Foods* available at

www.firststepsnutrition.org/healthy-start

Information on Healthy Start can be found at

www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Information on Best Start Foods can be found at

www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods/



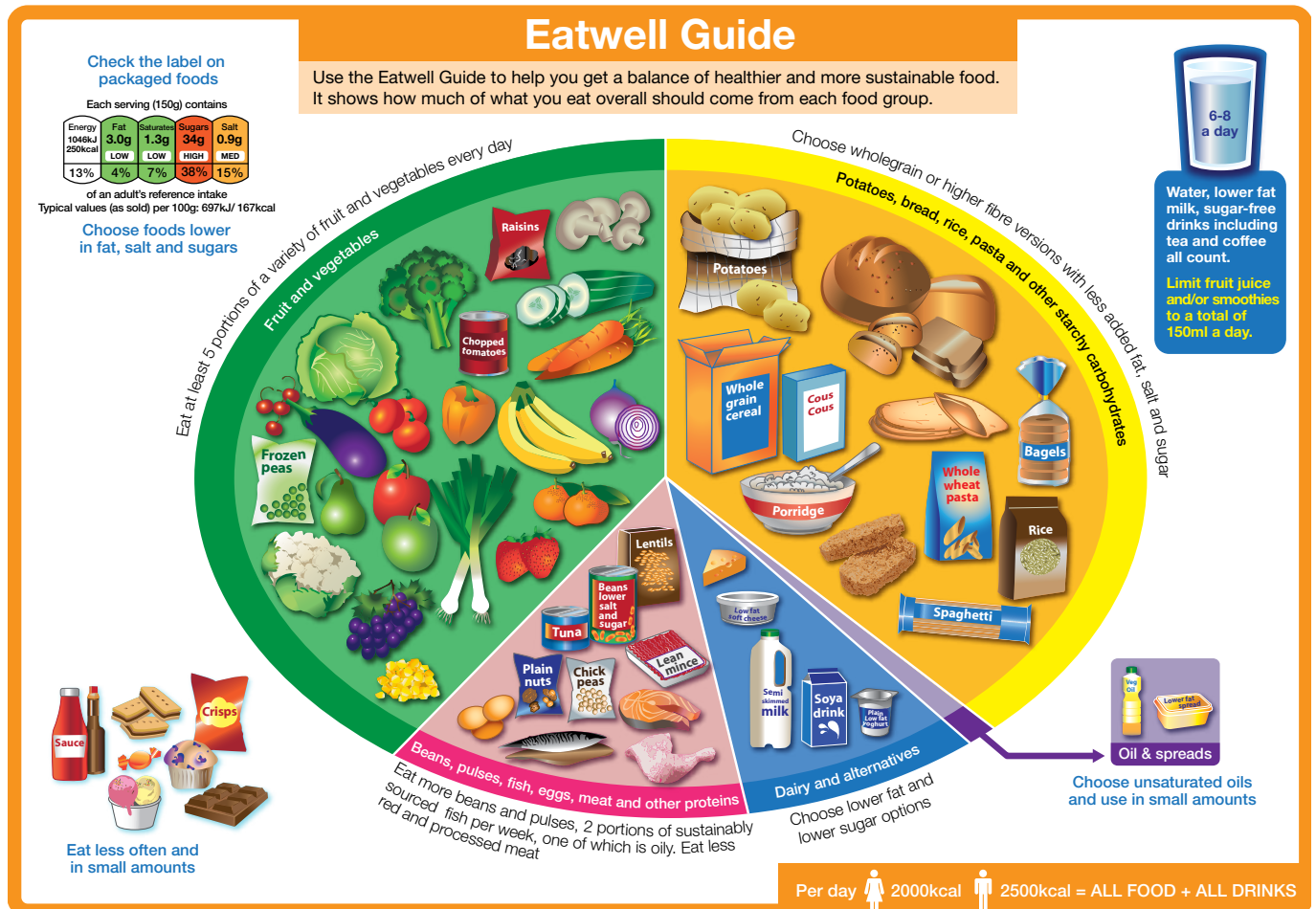
Simple family recipes

You can find a simple family recipe book on our website at www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-resources. The *Eating well recipe book* shows how recipes can be adapted for everyone in the family, and the sort of portion sizes that provide the energy and nutrients needed, for a main meal, by different family members. The recipes are all easy and cost-effective, and require minimal cooking skills and equipment.



Eating well for everyone

The information on the next few pages summarises public health advice on what a good diet looks like for adults, and provides some practical tips on what the advice means in practice.



Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

© Crown copyright 2016

Meals and snacks should be based around these two food groups:

- **Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates.** These foods should make up over one-third of the food we eat. Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar.
- **Fruit and vegetables.** These should make up more than one-third of the food we eat. Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.

It is also important to include foods from these two food groups:

- **Dairy and alternatives** provide useful nutrients and should be eaten every day in moderate amounts. Choose lower-fat and lower sugar options.
- **Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins.** Eat more beans and pulses and two portions of sustainably sourced fish every week, one of which is oily.

Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar should be limited in the diet as eating these foods and drinks means that it may be harder to get in all the nutrients you need without having too much energy (calories).

Oils and spreads: Choose oils and fats which are unsaturated, and use in small amounts.

Drinks: Have 6-8 drinks a day. Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count. Limit fruit juices and/or smoothies to 150ml per day as the sugars in these drinks can damage teeth and contribute to overweight.

Food group: Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

ADVICE

Starchy foods – which include potatoes, bread, rice and pasta – should make up a third of the daily diet.

Eating a variety of breads and other starchy foods such as rice and pasta, including those with more wholegrain flour, will add additional nutrients and fibre to the diet.

WHY?

Starchy foods are a good source of energy and the main source of a range of nutrients in the diet. As well as starch, these foods supply fibre, calcium, iron and B vitamins.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

All varieties of bread including wholemeal, granary and seeded breads, chapattis, bagels, roti, tortillas and pitta bread

Potatoes, yam, cocoyam, dasheen, breadfruit and cassava

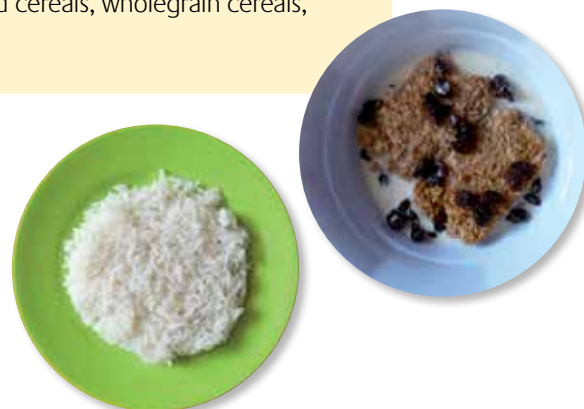
Breakfast cereals

Rice, couscous, bulgar wheat, maize (polenta) and cornmeal

Noodles, spaghetti and other pastas

TIPS

- Potatoes are a useful starchy food as they are cheap, can be grown across the UK, contain a range of useful nutrients and are very versatile.
- Have more pasta and rice and use less sauce. Choose tomato-based sauces instead of cheese-based sauces.
- When serving rice and pasta, try to use wholemeal, wholegrain, brown or high-fibre versions.
- Some breakfast cereals are nutrient-fortified (that is, with added iron, folic acid and other vitamins and minerals), but avoid those that are high in sugar (those with more than 15g of sugar per 100g of cereal).
- Eat a variety of breads, such as seeded, wholegrain and granary. Use thicker slices and have low-fat options for fillings.
- If you're making chips or fried potatoes, use large pieces of potato and have thick or straight-cut chips as these absorb less fat.
- Baked potatoes do not need to have butter or margarine added when served with moist fillings or sauces.
- For people who have allergies to wheat, oats, barley or rye, good alternatives to offer are foods made from maize (such as polenta), rice, rice flour, potatoes, potato flour, buckwheat, sago, tapioca, soya and soya flour.
- Cereal foods which are good sources of **iron** and **zinc** include fortified cereals, wholegrain cereals, wholemeal bread and flour, couscous and wholemeal pasta.





Food group: Fruit and vegetables

ADVICE

Fruit and vegetables should make up about a third of the daily diet.

Try and eat at least 5 portions a day. A portion is about 80g (a whole fruit, like an apple or orange, or 2 to 3 tablespoons of vegetables, or a small glass of fruit juice.)

A 150ml glass of 100% fruit or vegetable juice, or 100% fruit and vegetable based smoothie, can count as 1 portion of fruit or vegetables each day.

Dried fruit contains useful nutrients but if eaten between meals can damage teeth. So eat dried fruit *with* meals – for example, with breakfast cereals or desserts.

Aim for 1 or 2 portions of fruit or vegetables with each meal, and have fruit and vegetables as snacks.

WHY?

Fruit and vegetables are good sources of many vitamins and minerals.

There is evidence that consuming 400g or more of fruit and vegetables a day reduces the risk of developing chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease and some cancers.

Including fruits and vegetables in the diet will help to increase the intake of fibre.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

All types of fresh, frozen and canned vegetables – for example, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, frozen peas, peppers, swede and sweetcorn

Beans and pulses, including baked beans, chick peas and kidney beans

All types of salad vegetables, including lettuce, cucumber, tomato, raw carrots, peppers and beetroot

All types of fresh fruit – for example, apples, bananas, kiwi fruit, oranges, pears, mango and plums

All types of canned fruit in fruit juice – for example, pineapple, peaches and mandarin oranges

Stewed fruit

Dried fruit

Fruit juice (100% juice) or fruit and vegetable only smoothies.
Have no more than 150ml of fruit juice and/or smoothies a day.

TIPS

- Steaming or cooking vegetables with minimum amounts of water, and serving them as soon as possible, will help retain vitamins.
- Use fresh fruit and vegetables as soon as possible, rather than storing them, to avoid vitamin loss.
- Incorporate fruit and vegetables in snack options. Many vegetables can be eaten raw.
- Add vegetables and pulses to curries, casseroles or stir-fry dishes and have at least two types of vegetables with fish, chicken or meat.
- One daily glass (150ml) of 100% fruit or vegetable juice or 100% fruit and vegetable smoothie can help iron absorption, so have with a meal such as breakfast.
- Add a handful of dried fruit to cereals, porridge and desserts like rice pudding.
- Raw vegetables can increase colour, taste and texture at mealtimes, but if eating vegetables and fruit raw, always wash them before eating.
- Add extra vegetables to dishes such as Bolognese sauce, shepherd's pie, curries, stews and soups.
- Fruit and vegetables which are useful sources of **iron** include spinach, broccoli, spring greens, dried apricots, raisins, baked beans, broad beans and blackcurrants.
- Fruit and vegetables which are useful sources of **folic acid** include spinach, broccoli, peas, oranges, melon, green leafy salads and tomatoes.
- Fruit and vegetables which are useful **non-dairy sources of calcium** include green leafy vegetables, dried fruit and oranges.

Food group: Dairy and alternatives

ADVICE	WHY?	WHAT'S INCLUDED
Have dairy foods such as milk, yoghurt and cheese every day (if you eat these foods).	Milk and dairy products are good sources of calcium, protein and vitamin A. Calcium helps to contribute to good bone health.	Skimmed, semi-skimmed, 1% fat and whole milk Dried milk, goats' and sheep's milk
Have low-fat options such as semi-skimmed milk or 1% fat milk, low-fat yoghurt and reduced-fat cheeses.	The fat content of different dairy products varies and much of this is saturated fat.	Cheeses – for example, Cheddar cheese, cottage cheese, cheese spreads, feta, Edam, goats' cheese and Parmesan
Vegetarians should not rely on cheese as the main protein item.	If you choose milk alternatives, make sure they are unsweetened and fortified with calcium.	Yoghurt Fromage frais
If you don't eat dairy foods (for example, because you are vegan or lactose-intolerant), calcium-fortified unsweetened soya milk or other alternatives can be used instead of cows' or other animal milk.		Unsweetened fortified milk alternatives made from soya, nuts, oats, coconut or hemp, and fortified products such as yoghurt or cheese made from these alternatives.

TIPS

- Choose reduced-fat hard cheeses, cottage cheese or low-fat soft cheese.
- Some dairy products can contain high levels of salt. Look for lower-salt cheeses and use smaller amounts of stronger cheese rather than larger amounts of milder cheese.
- Have semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed milk, and low-fat yoghurts and fromage frais.
- Use plain yoghurt or fromage frais instead of cream, soured cream or crème fraîche in recipes.
- Try frozen yoghurts as an alternative to ice cream.
- If you are on a dairy-free diet, have unsweetened fortified milk alternatives in place of milky drinks.
- Avoid sweetened milk drinks, as the sugars in these drinks can damage the teeth.





Food group: Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

ADVICE	WHY?	WHAT'S INCLUDED
Everyone is encouraged to eat more pulses and beans in their diet. Vegetarians and vegans should eat a range of meat alternatives.	Beans, pulses, eggs, meat alternatives such as tofu, tempeh, textured vegetable proteins, and nuts all provide good sources of nutrients.	Beans and pulses such as chick peas, lentils, kidney beans, butter beans, textured vegetable protein, nuts, nut butters, seeds, soya products such as tofu, and Quorn.
Everyone is encouraged to eat two portions of sustainably sourced fish a week, one of which is an oil-rich fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel, herring, pilchards or sardines. Limit the amount of processed fish and dishes (such as fish cakes, fish fingers and battered fish products).	Choose sustainably sourced fish. Good white fish options include coley, pollack, hake, flounder, dab and whiting. Oil-rich fish provides a good source of omega-3 fats, which may help to protect against heart disease. Oil-rich fish are also a source of vitamins A and D. Fish products such as fish cakes and fish fingers may have a low fish content and may be high in fat and salt.	Fish includes all fresh and frozen fish (including coley, cod, haddock, mackerel, salmon, trout), canned fish (such as sardines, tuna, pilchards) and shellfish or crustaceans (such as crab, lobster, prawns and mussels). Choose sustainably sourced fish. Good white fish options include coley, pollack, hake, flounder, dab and whiting. Find out more at www.mcsuk.org
Eggs can be eaten at breakfast and as part of main meals.	Eggs are a good source of protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, choline and some minerals.	Boiled, poached or scrambled eggs, or omelettes.
Eat a variety of meat and meat alternatives at main meals. Use lean meat (meat which has a fat content of about 10%) and limit the amount of processed meat products consumed, such as sausages, burgers, canned meats, pies, pasties and crumbed or battered meat products.	Meat and meat alternatives are a good source of protein, vitamins and zinc. Some meat and meat products can contain a lot of fat, saturated fat and salt, and buying meat diluted with other ingredients is poor value for money.	Meat includes all cuts of beef, pork, lamb, poultry (chicken and turkey), game (such as venison or rabbit), offal (such as liver, kidney or heart), and meat products such as bacon, sausages, beefburgers, pies and cold meats such as ham or salami.

TIPS

- Eggs and canned pulses such as chick peas and red kidney beans, or easy-to-use dried pulses such as lentils, are cheap alternatives to meat and fish.
- Buy good-quality meat and use smaller amounts.
- Use more vegetables, pulses and starchy food to make meals go further, and to add more texture and flavour. This will also mean that less meat is needed, reducing both the fat content and the cost of the meal.
- Avoid cheap processed meat products such as sausages, burgers, canned meat products, coated and battered products, pies, pasties and sausage rolls. These often contain small amounts of meat but lots of fat and salt, and are not good nutritional value for money.
- Always cook meat dishes thoroughly, particularly if they are bought ready-prepared. Make sure that any leftover meat dishes are stored and reheated safely.
- Tinned fish provides useful nutrients and can be a cost-effective ingredient in recipes.
- Frozen fish is often cheaper than fresh fish.
- Buy fish from sustainable fish stocks. Look for the Marine Stewardship Council logo.
- Reduce the amount of processed fish products eaten – particularly those that are fried or coated, such as fish fingers or fish cakes – as these are often poor nutritional value for money.

Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

ADVICE	WHY?	WHAT'S INCLUDED
Fatty and sugary foods can add palatability to the diet but should be eaten in small amounts each day.	Foods that are high in fat and/or sugar often provide a lot of calories and a lower proportion of other nutrients.	Foods containing fat include: butter, margarine, other spreading fats and low-fat spreads, cooking oils, oil-based salad dressings, mayonnaise, cream, chocolate, crisps, biscuits, pastries, cakes, puddings, ice cream, rich sauces, and gravies.
Reduce the amount of foods containing fat – for example, fat spreads and butter, cooking oils and mayonnaise.	Some foods in this group are also high in sodium/salt.	Foods and drinks containing sugar include: soft drinks, sweets, chocolate, jams, sugar, cakes, puddings, biscuits, pastries and ice cream.
Other foods containing fat and sugar – such as cakes and biscuits – should be eaten only occasionally.	Foods and drinks containing sugar often contain few other nutrients, and having them frequently between meals can contribute to tooth decay.	

TIPS

- Use fat spreads rich in monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats.
- Use cooking oils high in monounsaturates, such as soya, rapeseed or olive oils.
- Avoid serving pastry dishes frequently.
- Have low-fat yoghurt with puddings or pies, rather than cream.
- Base desserts on fresh fruit, canned fruit in juice, and yoghurt or low-fat custard.
- Have water, unsweetened fruit juices and chilled milk drinks rather than sugary soft drinks.
- Have wholegrain or plain cereals rather than sugar-coated cereals.
- If you currently add sugar to hot drinks such as tea and coffee, try cutting back a little bit at a time to get used to a less sweet taste.

SALT

Having too much salt in the diet can lead to high blood pressure, which can contribute to stroke and coronary heart disease in later life. Everyone is encouraged to limit their salt intake to no more than 6g a day. Most of the salt we eat is in processed and ready-prepared foods, and cooking for yourself is the best way of cutting down on added salt (and sugar) in meals and snacks.

Foods that have a lot of salt

- Ready-made soups
- Bottled pasta sauces and other cooking sauces
- Sauces, spreads, pickles, chutneys and soy sauce
- Mayonnaise and salad cream
- Savoury ready meals
- Savoury snacks such as crisps, salted nuts, papadums and savoury biscuits
- Bread, rolls, garlic bread and flavoured breads
- Fast food or take-aways such as pizza, burgers, and Chinese and Indian take-away meals
- Meat pies and pasties, and canned meat products
- Smoked foods and smoked meats such as ham and bacon
- Some sweet foods such as buns, pastries and hot chocolate powder

Top tips for eating well

Helping new families to eat well

Below is some advice that can be shared with new families.

- If you share where you live with a partner or other family members, try to eat together at meal times and all eat the same healthy food.
- Make sure foods that you like and that are good options are easily to hand: chopped up fruit and vegetables, yoghurt, wholegrain bread, and cooled water in the fridge.
- If other people are helping you with shopping, be specific about what you want them to buy.
- If you find shopping difficult with a new baby in tow, find out about vegetable box and other food box scheme deliveries in your area. This is often good, local and organic food at reasonable prices and you are also supporting your local farmers.
- In some areas you can still have a milk delivery to your door, which can be useful in the first few months after a new baby arrives. You may be able to get other foods like bread, eggs and juice in the same delivery.
- If friends and family come and visit, ask them to bring you fruit baskets rather than cakes and sweets, or even a healthy casserole you can freeze for another day. People usually love to help and being given specific ideas can be helpful for them too.

Returning to pre-pregnancy weight

Most people will want to get back to their pre-pregnancy weight in the months after they give birth, but women are all different. It may take a while for women to return to their pre-pregnancy weight (or to a weight they feel happy with). Breastfeeding can really help with long-term weight management. Women should be recommended to wait until after their six-week postnatal check before attempting to manage their weight, to give themselves time to recover from the birth and to fully establish breastfeeding. Many women find that their body rapidly returns to its pre-pregnancy shape once breastfeeding is well established and they are back to the same active lifestyle they had before becoming pregnant. Evidence suggests that, after three to four months, breastfeeding women are slimmer than formula-feeding women who eat fewer calories. If new mums are worried about their weight, they should talk to their midwife, health visitor or GP, as there is specific advice that these professionals can offer to women after childbirth.

Exercising after childbirth

Most women are able to start doing gentle postnatal exercises very soon after they have given birth to their baby. Finding ways to incorporate activity into the day – by going for a walk or a swim, doing some yoga or pilates or a postnatal exercise class with trained instructors – can all help burn energy, shake off tiredness and lift the spirit. If it proves difficult for women to fit other exercise into their life, encourage walking for at least half an hour every day with baby in a sling or buggy. Walking is the best exercise for everyone, and taking baby out for a walk is a good way of encouraging them to nap as well.

- New mums should wait until their baby is at least 6 weeks old before starting more strenuous exercise.
- Exercise should be started gradually. If new mums plan to do very strenuous exercise that they have not done for a while, they should take advice from a health professional first, so that they don't cause an injury.
- If increasing activity, new mums should consume additional fluids to replace those lost by sweating.
- Caution new mums not to do too much too soon.
- There is no reason not to breastfeed after exercise.

Planning another baby

It's important that women give their body a chance to recover nutritionally before conceiving again, if they can. If a family plans a short space between pregnancies, eating a good diet is particularly important, so following the advice in this resource will be useful.

If women take a Healthy Start vitamin for pregnant or breastfeeding mums, they can carry on taking this, as it will provide the folic acid that is important for women planning a pregnancy. If only a vitamin D supplement is taken when breastfeeding, or if women are formula feeding and are not taking vitamins, and another pregnancy may occur, encourage women to take a folic acid supplement.

For advice on eating well for pregnant women, see *Eating well for a healthy pregnancy*, and for young pregnant women (under 19 years of age) see *Eating well in pregnancy: A practical guide to support teenagers*.



What does eating well look like for new mums?

All new mums need to eat well and the example menus below show the sorts of eating patterns that will meet the energy and nutrient needs of most women of child-bearing age. Recipes for all the snacks in these menu plans, and photos of them, are on pages 21-42. The recipes for the main dishes are all in our resource *Eating well for a healthy pregnancy* at www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-in-pregnancy

Breakfast

Weet bisks with milk and raisins

Snack

Carrot cake
Small glass of semi-skimmed milk

Packed lunch

Cream cheese bagel with boiled egg, cucumber and celery sticks
Malt loaf and a pear

Snack

Baguette with houmous, carrot and cucumber sticks

Evening meal

Creamy chicken and leek hotpot
Greek yoghurt with banana



Breakfast

Eggy bread with baked beans

Snack

Glass of semi-skimmed milk and banana

Lunch

Lentil and carrot soup and bread

Snack

Malt loaf with satsuma
Milky coffee

Evening meal

Chicken and mushroom pie and vegetables
Quick microwave sponge pudding and custard



Breakfast

Peanut butter and banana sandwich
Apple
Orange juice

Lunch

Sweetcorn chowder with toasted tortilla
Fruit scone with jam

Snack

Gingerbread loaf
Tea

Evening meal

Jacket potato with roasted vegetables and tomato filling
Rice pudding with canned mandarin oranges

If you are breastfeeding, you may want to choose decaffeinated tea and coffee. (For more information on caffeine see page 49.)

Breakfast

Muesli with milk
Orange juice

Snack

Toasted teacake
Tea

Lunch

Vegetable biryani
Fruit fool

Snack

Mixed dried fruit and nuts
Tea

Evening meal

Jacket potato with tuna, sweetcorn
and soft cheese
Poached pear with Greek yoghurt
and honey

**Breakfast**

Porridge with jam
Orange juice

Lunch

Veggie burger and salad
Soya yoghurt with mango

Snack

Pitta bread crisps with a chilli dip
and grapes
Milky coffee

Evening meal

Shepherdess pie
Baked banana

Evening snack

Malted milk drink

**Breakfast**

Granola with apple and milk
Milky coffee

Lunch

Fish pie with broccoli
Apple crumble

Snack

Dates and sunflower seeds
Milky coffee

Evening meal

Pitta with houmous and cucumber with
carrot salad
Orange

**Breakfast**

Scrambled egg and tomato with toast
Orange juice

Lunch

Mexican bean and cheese wrap with red
pepper and celery
Melon

Snack

Bowl of mixed nuts and almond milk
Tea

Evening meal

Vegetable curry with lentil dahl and rice
Mango fritters with yoghurt

Evening snack

Crumpet, soft cheese and kiwi
Yoghurt and fresh fruit smoothie



Ideas for healthy snacks and drinks

New mums may find they have less time to prepare food, but it is important that they get the energy and nutrients they need even if they end up having more frequent, smaller snacks rather than main meals. There are some particularly important nutrients that women need in their child-bearing years, and the snacks and drinks suggested here are designed to provide a wide range of nutrients. To make it easy, we have colour-coded snacks and drinks by their approximate calorie content as shown below. This is not to encourage calorie counting, but to show the different contributions these items can make as people choose different eating patterns across the day. If women avoid dairy products, it is particularly important that they get important nutrients such as calcium, riboflavin and iodine from other food sources. We have highlighted some snacks as dairy-free.



A moderately active woman of child-bearing age needs about 2,100kcal a day. The main meals we suggest in our menu plans on pages 16-17 each provide about 500kcal. So, for example, if you have two main meals each day, you can have about another 1,000kcal a day in snacks and drinks, and you can fit these in around the other activities you do.

If you're trying to lose weight after the birth of your baby, or if you're very active, make sure you talk to your midwife or health visitor about this, as they can offer you special advice about how to manage your energy intake safely and may be able to refer you to a dietitian. For more information about managing weight and activity after birth, see page 14.

Breastfeeding and feeling hungry?

Some breastfeeding mums feel very hungry when they are breastfeeding, and may also be more thirsty. See page 45 for advice about eating well while breastfeeding.

Snacks and drinks

50kcal

Small glass of milk

Low-fat yoghurt and berries

Dairy-free options

Apple

Canned mandarins

Carrot and pepper

Dried apricots

Dried figs

Grapes

Melon

Pear

Pineapple

Plums

Snacks and drinks

100kcal

Milk

Lassi

Milky tea with digestive biscuit

Malted milk drink

Milky decaffeinated coffee

Milky decaffeinated tea

Chocolate milkshake

Yoghurt and fresh fruit smoothie

Soft cheese and banana platter

Mozzarella and pear platter

Custard with apricots

Frozen yoghurt with grapes

Dairy-free options

Soya yoghurt with mango

Soya milkshake

Soya milk with apple

Carrot sticks and houmous

Sunflower seeds

Dates



Snacks

200kcal

Mashed avocado on melba toast with cherry tomatoes and red pepper sticks, with milk

Popcorn and apple slices, with milk

Oatcakes, celery sticks and houmous, with milk

Wholemeal toast with honey and apple slices, with milk

Crumpet, soft cheese and kiwi

Spicy potato wedges with tomato salsa, with milk

Dairy-free options

Pitta bread, houmous, pepper and cucumber sticks, and soya milk

Boiled egg and wholemeal toast

Poached egg on toast with tomatoes

Tomato soup and crispbread

Malt loaf with a satsuma

Pear and almonds



Snacks

250kcal

Cheese and tomato quesadillas

French toast

Leek and potato soup with a wholemeal roll

Tuna melt muffin

Mexican scrambled egg wrap

Pitta bread pizza

Scrambled egg and tomato with toast and a small glass of orange juice

Tortilla crisps with a curry dip and apple

Apple and cinnamon crumble and custard

Mango fritters with yoghurt

Porridge with jam and a small glass of orange juice

Quick microwave sponge pudding and custard

Rice pudding with canned mandarin oranges

Weet bisks with milk and raisins

Dairy-free options

Baguette with houmous, and carrot and cucumber sticks

Baked beans and French stick

Chick pea dahl with chapatti

Liver pâté and oatcakes, with celery sticks

Mini fish finger sandwich

Mixed nuts and almond milk

Sardines on toast, with tomatoes

Omelette with grilled tomato and toast and a small glass of orange juice

Baked banana

Pitta bread crisps with a chilli dip and grapes

Carrot cake

Snacks and drinks

Small glass of milk



Semi-skimmed milk 100ml

Low-fat yoghurt and berries



Low-fat plain yoghurt 100g
Berries 40g

Apple

DAIRY-FREE



Apple 100g

Canned mandarins

DAIRY-FREE



Canned mandarins in juice 150g

Carrot and pepper

DAIRY-FREE



Raw carrot 75g
Raw pepper 75g

Dried apricots

DAIRY-FREE



Dried apricots 35g

Snacks and drinks

50kcal

Dried figs

DAIRY-FREE



Dried figs 25g

Grapes

DAIRY-FREE



Grapes 90g

Melon

DAIRY-FREE



Melon 200g

Pear

DAIRY-FREE



Pear 120g

Pineapple

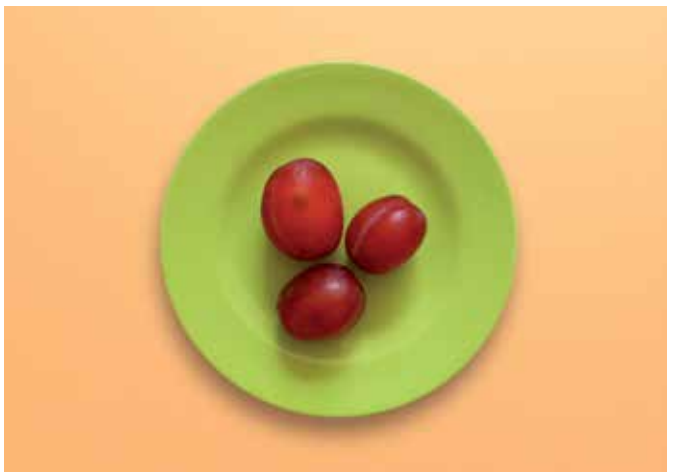
DAIRY-FREE



Pineapple canned in juice 100g

Plums

DAIRY-FREE



Plums 150g

Snacks and drinks

Milk



Semi-skimmed milk 200ml

Lassi



Lassi 200ml

Lassi

This recipe makes 1 portion of about 200ml.

60g plain yoghurt

140ml milk

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1. Mix the ingredients together in a jug or in a large jar and serve at room temperature.

Milky tea with digestive biscuit



Milky tea 100ml tea, 100ml milk

Digestive biscuit 16g

Malted milk drink



Malted milk drink made with semi-skimmed milk 150ml

Snacks and drinks

Milky decaffeinated coffee



Decaffeinated coffee made with semi-skimmed milk 200ml

Milky decaffeinated tea



Decaffeinated tea made with semi-skimmed milk 200ml

Chocolate milkshake



Chocolate milkshake
(made with semi-skimmed milk) 150g

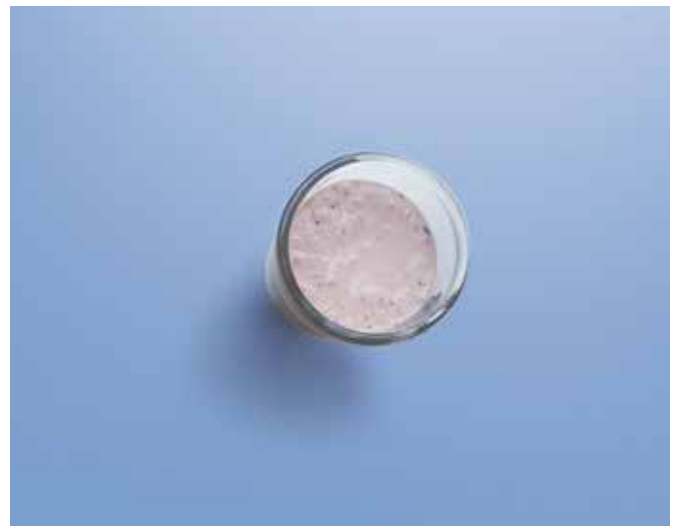
Chocolate milkshake

This recipe makes 1 portion of about 150ml.

3 teaspoons chocolate milkshake mix powder
150ml semi-skimmed milk

1. Mix the milk and chocolate milkshake mix powder and stir well, or put it in a large jar, screw on the lid and then shake it up.

Yoghurt and fresh fruit smoothie



Yoghurt and fresh fruit smoothie 200ml

Yoghurt and fresh fruit smoothie

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 200ml.

400g natural yoghurt
100ml milk
320g berries (blueberries, strawberries, blackberries)

Each portion uses 100g yoghurt, 25ml milk and 80g berries.

1. Place all the ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. Or, place in a jug and blend using a hand-held blender. Serve immediately.

Snacks and drinks

Soft cheese and banana platter



Soft cheese 30g

Banana 80g

Mozzarella and pear platter



Mozzarella cheese 35g

Pear 80g

Custard with apricots



Custard with apricots 110g

Custard with apricots

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 110g.

280g custard (home-made or ready-prepared)

160g dried apricots, chopped

Each portion uses 70g of custard and 40g of chopped dried apricots.

Frozen yoghurt with grapes



Frozen yoghurt 60g

Grapes 80g

Frozen yoghurt

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 60g.

240g yoghurt

1. Put the yoghurt in a freezable tub and place in the freezer.
2. Mix the yoghurt every hour or so for about 2 to 3 hours to avoid ice crystals forming.
3. Freeze overnight.

Snacks and drinks

Soya yoghurt with mango

DAIRY-FREE



Plain soya yoghurt 100g
Mango 100g

Soya yoghurt with mango

This recipe makes 4 portions of 200g.

400g yoghurt
1 large mango, peeled and de-stoned

Soya milkshake

DAIRY-FREE



Soya milkshake 300ml

Soya milkshake

This recipe makes 1 portion of about 300ml.

200ml soya milk
80g drained canned peaches (canned in juice)
(= 2/3 of a small 200g can of peaches)

1. Place all the ingredients in a blender or jug and blend until smooth.

Soya milk with apple

DAIRY-FREE



Unsweetened calcium-fortified soya milk 200ml
Apple 80g

Carrot sticks and houmous

DAIRY-FREE



Carrot sticks 100g
Houmous 30g

Snacks and drinks

Sunflower seeds

DAIRY-FREE

Dates

DAIRY-FREE



Sunflower seeds 20g

Dates 40g



Snacks

Mashed avocado on melba toast with cherry tomatoes and red pepper sticks, with milk



Mashed avocado 30g
 Melba toast 15g
 Cherry tomatoes 40g
 Red pepper sticks 40g
 Milk (semi-skimmed) 150ml

Popcorn and apple slices, with milk



Popcorn 15g
 Apple 80g
 Milk (semi-skimmed) 150ml

Oatcakes, celery sticks and houmous, with milk



Oatcakes 30g
 Celery sticks 40g
 Houmous 40g
 Milk (semi-skimmed) 150ml

Houmous

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 40g.

Half a 400g can of chickpeas, drained (about 120g drained weight)

1 tablespoon lemon juice
 1 tablespoon tahini (sesame seed paste)
 1 teaspoon garlic paste
 1 tablespoon water

1. Place all the ingredients in a blender and blend until a smooth or chunky paste, depending on your preference. If you don't have a blender, mash all the ingredients together with a fork.

Snacks

Wholemeal toast with honey and apple slices, with milk



Wholemeal toast	35g
Honey	10g
Apple	80g
Milk (semi-skimmed)	150ml

Crumpet, soft cheese and kiwi



Toasted crumpet	50g
Low-fat soft cheese	30g
Kiwi	1 kiwi, peeled and sliced

Spicy potato wedges with tomato salsa, with milk



Spicy potato wedges	70g
Tomato salsa	40g
Milk (semi-skimmed)	150ml

Spicy potato wedges

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 70g.

2 medium potatoes
 4 tablespoons vegetable oil
 2 teaspoons lemon juice
 2 teaspoons mustard powder
 2 teaspoons paprika

1. Heat the oven to 200°C / 400°F / Gas 6.
2. Scrub the potatoes and cut each one into 8 wedges.
3. Place the remaining ingredients in a jug and whisk together.
4. Put the wedges in a roasting tin (in a single layer), pour the dressing over and mix well.
5. Cook on the top shelf of the oven for about 30 minutes, turning once after 15 minutes.

Pitta bread, houmous, pepper and cucumber sticks, and soya milk

DAIRY-FREE



Pitta bread	30g
Houmous	40g
Red pepper sticks	40g
Cucumber sticks	40g
Soya milk	150ml

Boiled egg and wholemeal toast

DAIRY-FREE



Egg	60g
Wholemeal toast	40g

Boiled egg and wholemeal toast

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

4 eggs
4 slices wholemeal bread

1. Place the eggs in a pan of cold water and bring to the boil.
2. Boil the eggs for about 4 to 5 minutes and then remove from the heat.
3. Toast the bread and cut it into slices.

Poached egg on toast with tomatoes

DAIRY-FREE



Egg	60g
Wholemeal toast	40g
Tomatoes	20g

Poached egg on toast with tomatoes

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

4 slices wholemeal bread
4 eggs
8 small tomatoes, cut in half

1. Boil some water in a saucepan.
2. Break each egg separately into a cup or mug and then gently add it to the boiling water.
3. Poach the eggs for about 3 minutes.
4. Toast the bread.
5. Serve the eggs on the toast. Garnish with the tomatoes.

Snacks

Tomato soup and crispbread

DAIRY-FREE



Tomato soup 200g
Crispbread 15g

Tomato soup and crispbread

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 215g.

2 large cans (400g) tomato soup*
4 crispbreads

* Check the label and choose soup that has a high tomato content (for example over 90% tomatoes) and a lower salt content.

1. Heat the soup, following the instructions on the can.
2. Serve each bowl of soup with a crispbread.

Malt loaf with a satsuma

DAIRY-FREE



Malt loaf 60g
Satsuma 100g

Pear and almonds

DAIRY-FREE



Pear 150g
Almonds (shelled) 30g

Cheese and tomato quesadillas



Cheese and tomato quesadillas 140g

Cheese and tomato quesadillas

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 140g.

- 1 tablespoon tomato purée
- 1 teaspoon mild chilli powder
- 4 medium tomatoes, diced
- 60g Cheddar cheese, grated
- 8 small tortilla wraps

1. Mix together the tomato purée, chilli powder, diced tomato and cheese.
2. Place a tortilla in a frying pan and spread with a quarter of the tomato mixture. Place another tortilla on top and dry-fry until brown. Turn the tortilla over and dry-fry until brown.
3. Remove the tortilla from the pan and cut into triangles.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3.

French toast



French toast 110g

French toast

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 110g.

- 4 eggs
- 120ml semi-skimmed milk
- 4 large slices (120g) wholemeal bread
- 20g butter
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. Break the eggs into a bowl and beat together with the milk.
2. Dip the slices of bread in the milk mixture until fully coated.
3. Heat a pan and melt the butter. Don't let the butter go brown.
4. Fry the bread until the egg mixture is cooked on both sides, turning the bread to ensure even cooking.
5. Sprinkle with the cinnamon before serving.

Snacks

Leek and potato soup with a wholemeal roll



Leek and potato soup 250g

Wholemeal roll 80g

Leek and potato soup

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 250g.

- 4 medium leeks
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 onion, peeled and diced
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
- 500ml water
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 250ml semi-skimmed milk

1. Chop the top off the leeks and trim the roots. Chop the leeks in half lengthways and wash under running water, fanning out the layers, to make sure they are thoroughly clean. Chop the leeks roughly.
2. Heat the oil in a large pot over a medium heat and add the leeks, onions and potatoes. Stir, reduce the heat to low, and simmer gently for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally to stop browning.
3. Add the water, bay leaf and seasoning, stir well and bring to the boil. Then reduce the heat, cover and simmer for 15 minutes, until the potatoes are soft.
4. Take out the bay leaf and purée the soup in a liquidiser or with a hand-held blender. Add the milk, and heat through before serving.

Tuna melt muffin



Tuna melt muffin 140g

Tuna melt muffin

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 140g.

- 2 muffins
- 4 teaspoons tomato purée
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced
- 1 can (185g) tuna in spring water, drained and flaked
- 60g Cheddar cheese, grated

Each portion uses 1/2 muffin, 1 teaspoon of tomato purée, 1/2 tomato, 1/4 can tuna and 15g Cheddar cheese.

1. Cut the muffins in half.
2. Spread the tomato purée on the cut surface of the muffins, and then layer on the sliced tomato and tuna. Sprinkle with cheese and then cook under a hot grill until browned.

Mexican scrambled egg wrap



Mexican scrambled egg 100g
Tortilla wrap 40g

Mexican scrambled egg

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

- 4 eggs
- 2 teaspoons butter
- 2 spring onions, chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1 teaspoon mild chilli powder

Each portion uses 1 egg, 1/2 teaspoon of butter, 1/2 spring onion, 1/2 tomato and 1/4 teaspoon of chilli powder.

1. Beat the eggs in a bowl.
2. Melt the butter in a non-stick saucepan.
3. Add the eggs, stirring all the time over a low heat until the egg is thoroughly set.
4. Mix in the spring onions, tomatoes and chilli powder.

Pitta bread pizza



Pitta bread pizza 110g

Pitta bread pizza

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 110g.

- 4 pitta breads
- 4 teaspoons tomato purée
- 120g grated cheese
- 60g mushrooms

Each portion uses 1 pitta bread, 1 teaspoon of tomato purée, 30g cheese and 1 or 2 mushrooms.

1. Heat the grill to a medium temperature and toast the pitta breads on one side.
2. Remove the bread from the grill and place the tomato purée, mushrooms and cheese on the untoasted side of the pitta bread.
3. Place under the grill for a few minutes until the cheese has melted.

Tip: You could try using other vegetables for toppings. Peppers, sweetcorn or left-over vegetables can be used instead of mushrooms.

Snacks

Scrambled egg and tomato with toast and a small glass of orange juice



Scrambled egg	55g
Grilled tomato	80g
Wholemeal toast	35g
Vegetable fat spread	8g
Orange juice	150ml

Scrambled egg

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 55g.

4 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
4 teaspoons butter

Each portion of scrambled egg uses 1 egg, 1/2 tablespoon of milk and 1 teaspoon of butter.

1. Beat the eggs in a bowl with the milk.
2. Melt the butter in a non-stick saucepan.
3. Add the eggs, stirring all the time over a low heat until the egg is set thoroughly.

Tortilla crisps with a curry dip and apple



Tortilla crisps	40g
Curry dip	50g
Apple	80g

Tortilla crisps

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 40g.

4 small tortilla wraps

Each portion uses 1 tortilla wrap.

1. Heat the oven to 200°C / 400°F / Gas 6.
2. Cut the tortillas into triangles and spread out in a single layer on a baking tray. Bake in the oven for about 10 to 15 minutes until crisp.

Curry dip

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 50g.

1/2 small onion, grated
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon horseradish sauce
1 teaspoon cider vinegar
150g fromage frais
1 heaped tablespoon reduced-fat mayonnaise

1. Mix all the ingredients together in a small bowl and chill until serving.

Apple and cinnamon crumble and custard



Apple and cinnamon crumble 90g
Custard 80g

Apple and cinnamon crumble

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 90g.

75g plain flour
75g porridge oats
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons brown sugar
60g vegetable fat spread
500g cooking apples

1. Heat the oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas 4.
2. Grease the base of a small, deep, ovenproof dish with a little vegetable fat spread.
3. Mix all the dry ingredients together.
4. Melt the vegetable fat spread and add it to the dry ingredients. Mix well with a fork until a crumbly texture is achieved.
5. Peel, core and slice the apples and put them in layers in the base of the dish.
6. Place the crumble mixture on top of the apples and bake for 45 minutes until golden.

Mango fritters with yoghurt



Mango fritters 130g
Yoghurt 50g

Mango fritters

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 130g.

75g plain flour
1 large egg
60ml semi-skimmed milk
2 large ripe mangos
20g sugar
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1. Sift the flour into a large bowl.
2. Make a well in the centre of the flour, add the egg and gradually beat in the milk to form a smooth batter.
3. Mash the mangos and then add them and the sugar to the batter and mix well.
4. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Once hot, fry spoonfuls of the mixture for about 2 minutes on each side. Serve immediately.

Snacks

Porridge with jam and a small glass of orange juice



Porridge	250g
Jam	10g
Orange juice	150ml

Porridge

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 250g.

1 litre semi-skimmed milk
125g rolled oats

Each portion uses 250ml of milk and about 30g of oats.

1. Place the milk and oats in a non-stick saucepan.
2. Heat gently until boiling, and then turn the heat down and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the oats are softened and have absorbed the milk.

Quick microwave sponge pudding and custard



Quick microwave sponge pudding	60g
Custard	60g

Quick microwave sponge pudding

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 60g.

75g vegetable fat spread
75g caster sugar
75g self-raising flour
1 large egg
1 tablespoon semi-skimmed milk
4 tablespoons of fruit (for example, blackberries, blackcurrants, raspberries or chopped canned fruit)

This recipe is made in the microwave. You will need either 4 small pudding pots (plastic or ceramic), or 1 larger bowl to make one big pudding.

1. Put the vegetable fat spread, sugar, flour, egg and milk together in a large bowl and beat together until well mixed and smooth.
2. Place the fruit in the bottom of the individual bowls or a large bowl.
3. Divide the sponge mix between the bowls or place it in the large bowl.
4. Cover with cling film and microwave on high for 1 minute for an individual pudding, or for about 4 minutes for a large pudding.
5. Remove the cling film and turn the pudding upside down onto a plate.

Snacks

Rice pudding with canned mandarin oranges



Rice pudding 200g
 Mandarins canned in juice (drained) 50g
 (= 1/3 of a 300g can of mandarins)

Rice pudding

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 200g.

80g pudding rice
 900ml milk
 1 tablespoon sugar
 1 tablespoon butter
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon or nutmeg (optional)

1. Place the rice and milk in a saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 to 35 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the sugar and butter and then stir until the sugar has dissolved and the butter has melted.
3. Sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg before serving.

Weet bisks with milk and raisins



Weet bisks 40g (2 weet bisks)
 Semi-skimmed milk 150ml
 Raisins 20g

Snacks

Baguette with houmous, and carrot and cucumber sticks

DAIRY-FREE



Baguette 60g
 Houmous 40g
 Carrot sticks 80g
 Cucumber sticks 40g

Baked beans and French stick

DAIRY-FREE



Baked beans 200g
 French stick 40g

Baked beans and French stick

This makes 4 portions of about 240g.

- 2 large (400g) cans reduced-salt and reduced-sugar baked beans
- 1/2 large French stick

Chick pea dahl with chapatti

DAIRY-FREE



Wholemeal chapatti 50g
 Chick pea dahl 100g

Chick pea dahl

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon mild chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 large can (400g) chick peas, drained
- 100ml water

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a large pan and fry the cumin seeds for about a minute, until they 'pop'.
2. Add the onion, garlic, ginger, chilli powder and turmeric and fry for several minutes until the onions soften.
3. Add the drained chick peas to the pan, along with the water, and cook for 5 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Snacks

250kcal

Liver pâté and oatcakes, with celery sticks

DAIRY-FREE



Oatcakes 24g
Liver pâté 50g
Celery sticks 40g

Mini fish finger sandwich

DAIRY-FREE



2 fish fingers 56g
Baguette 50g
Lettuce 20g
Tomato 30g

Note: If you're on a dairy-free diet, check that the fish fingers are free from dairy products.

Mixed nuts and almond milk

DAIRY-FREE



Mixed unsalted nuts 40g
Unsweetened calcium-fortified almond milk 200ml

Sardines on toast, with tomatoes

DAIRY-FREE



Sardines 45g
Wholemeal toast 30g
Cherry tomatoes 30g

Sardines on toast

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 100g.

- 4 large slices (120g) wholemeal bread
- 2 cans (120g) sardines in brine, drained (180g drained weight)
- 120g cherry tomatoes

1. Toast the bread.
2. Serve with the sardines and tomatoes.

Snacks

Omelette with grilled tomato and toast and a small glass of orange juice

DAIRY-FREE



Omelette	60g
Grilled tomatoes	80g
Wholemeal toast	35g
Dairy-free spread	8g
Orange juice	150ml

Omelette

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 60g.

- 4 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 teaspoons dairy-free spread

Each portion of omelette uses 1 large egg, 1/2 tablespoon of water and 1/2 teaspoon of dairy-free spread.

1. Break the eggs into a jug or mixing bowl.
2. Add the water to the eggs and beat together using a fork.
3. Heat an omelette pan or frying pan over a medium heat.
4. Add the dairy-free spread to the hot pan and as soon as it sizzles, swirl the pan and add the egg mixture. Don't allow the spread to brown.
5. Allow the egg mixture to cook until the omelette is set.
6. Fold the omelette in half and serve.

Baked banana

DAIRY-FREE



Baked banana	200g
--------------	------

Baked banana

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 200g.

- 8 small bananas
- 4 tablespoons orange juice
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 4 orange slices for garnish (optional)

Each portion uses 2 small bananas, 1 tablespoon of orange juice and 1/2 teaspoon of sugar.

1. Lay the bananas in a flat bowl suitable for the microwave or grill.
2. Pour the orange juice over the bananas and sprinkle with the sugar.
3. Either cover with cling film and microwave on high for about 3 minutes until the bananas are soft, or place under a hot grill for 4 to 5 minutes.

Pitta bread crisps with a chilli dip and grapes

DAIRY-FREE

**Pitta bread crisps** 50g**Chilli dip** 30g**Grapes** 80g**Pitta bread crisps**

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 50g.

4 pitta breads

Each portion uses 1 pitta bread.

1. Heat the oven to 200°C / 400°F / Gas 6.
2. Cut the pitta bread open all the way through. Cut each piece into triangles and spread them out in a single layer on a baking tray. Bake in the oven for about 7 minutes until crisped and beginning to brown.

Chilli dip

This recipe makes 4 portions of about 30g.

- 1/2 small (200g) can chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 jalapeño pepper, de-seeded and finely chopped
- 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 clove garlic, crushed
- 1/2 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 1/2 tablespoon lemon juice

1. Mix all the ingredients together. Chill before serving.

Carrot cake

DAIRY-FREE

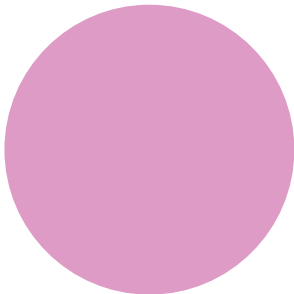
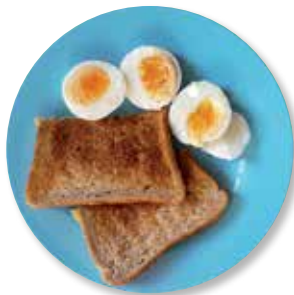
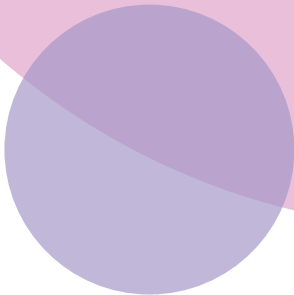
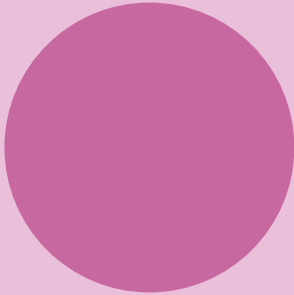
**Carrot cake** 65g**Carrot cake**

This recipe makes 8 portions of about 65g.

- 1 large carrot, peeled
 - 1 egg
 - 75g brown sugar
 - 5 tablespoons vegetable oil
 - 75g wholewheat flour
 - 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 25g sultanas
 - 1 teaspoon mixed spice
 - 1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
 - 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1. Heat the oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas 4.
 2. Grease the base of a small baking tin with a little vegetable oil and line with baking parchment.
 3. Grate the carrot.
 4. Whisk the egg and sugar together until thick and creamy.
 5. Whisk in the oil. Slowly add the grated carrots and the remaining ingredients and mix together.
 6. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin, level the surface and bake for 20 to 25 minutes until firm to the touch and golden brown.
 7. Cool on a wire tray.



Breastfeeding and eating well



Breastfeeding

In the UK, it is recommended that women exclusively breastfeed for the first six months of their baby's life, continue to breastfeed as they introduce complementary foods in the second six months, and then continue breastfeeding for the first year and for as long after that as they wish.

Any breastfeeding that mums can do is a good thing, and every day counts when it comes to



breastfeeding. To find out more about the benefits of breastfeeding for mother and infant health and the health of the planet see *Breastmilk and breastfeeding: A simple guide*, available at www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-infants-new-mums or any of the resources listed on page 60.

Families can talk to a breastfeeding counsellor and get answers to all their practical breastfeeding questions from the helplines listed opposite. Midwives, health visitors or local children's centres will have contact details for local support groups for breastfeeding mums. See also the Start4Life website www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/breastfeeding/ and the organisations listed on page 60.



Breastfeeding helplines

National Breastfeeding Helpline

(English, Welsh and Polish)
0300 100 0212

The National Breastfeeding Helpline is run in collaboration with the Breastfeeding Network and the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers.

La Leche League GB

0345 120 2918

NCT Support Line

0300 330 0700

Eating and drinking well when breastfeeding

- **A varied diet with few ultra-processed foods and lots of minimally and unprocessed foods is recommended when women are breastfeeding.**

See *Eating well for everyone* on page 8 for more on this.

- Some women may need some extra energy (calories). How much extra is needed depends on whether women are exclusively breastfeeding or mixed feeding (a combination of breastfeeding and formula feeding).
- All breastfeeding mums should take a daily vitamin D supplement.
- Breastfeeding mums may need to drink a bit more than usual. They should be guided by their thirst.
- There are a few foods and drinks that breastfeeding mothers should limit, or avoid.

We explain all this in more detail below.

How much extra energy (calories) might be needed when breastfeeding?

Women aged 19-50 years have an average daily energy requirement of 2,100 calories (kcal). Women aged 15-18 years need 2,400 calories a day, as they are still growing. For the time that they are breastfeeding, women may need some extra energy (calories), on top of that requirement. However, some women find their appetite does not increase and, unless they feel hungry or are losing more weight than they want to, there is no need to try and eat more.

Government nutrition experts have calculated that:

- An average woman who is **exclusively breastfeeding** her baby may need about 300 extra calories a day for about the first six months of her baby's life.
- Mums who **mixed feed** or just offer **one or two breastfeeds a day** may find they don't need anything extra at all, but may find an extra snack or milky drink helps them to manage their appetite.

If breastfeeding mums are feeling hungrier, it is important they get extra energy from nutritious snacks and drinks, rather than from high-fat, high-sugar foods. On pages 19-42 we suggest a range of extra snacks, foods and drinks that provide the additional energy and nutrients that breastfeeding mums might need.

Who might need extra energy when breastfeeding?

Mums who exclusively breastfeed throughout the first year of life (and beyond)

The first 6-9 months

Mums who are exclusively breastfeeding their baby in the first 6 months may need an extra 300 calories a day. If breastfeeding is continued as the baby's main milk drink after solid food has been introduced – as is recommended – women may still need an extra 300 calories a day until their baby is 8-9 months old. Women should be guided by their appetite and weight. As the amount of food a baby eats goes up, the amount of milk he or she takes will go down. Babies

are able to regulate their intake of food and breastmilk. This is one of many good reasons for carrying on breastfeeding, as the ability to regulate energy intake and energy needs may protect your baby from becoming overweight in later life.

Any breastmilk a baby receives in the first year of life and beyond will benefit both mother and child. Women are encouraged to continue offering breastfeeds as their baby starts to have other foods.

After 9 months

After a baby is about 9 months old, and for the rest of the time baby is breastfed, women may need an extra drink or snack of about 100 calories each day. However, everyone is different and, if women start losing weight, they might need to eat a bit more to maintain a healthy weight.

Mums who choose mixed feeding (a mixture of breastfeeding and formula feeding)

If a baby has more than half of his or her milk feeds as breastmilk but has some formula feeds

Mums may need an extra 150-200 calories a day if they feel hungrier.

If a baby is breastfed for less than half of his or her feeds (1-3 feeds a day)

Mums may need about an extra 100 calories a day if they feel hungrier.

Choosing healthy snacks and drinks

If women eat a bit more when they are breastfeeding, the snacks and drinks they choose should be nutritious. There are lots of examples of healthy snacks and drinks on pages 19-42.

Vitamin D supplements

Why should breastfeeding mums take a daily vitamin D supplement?

Vitamin D is very important for bone health for mothers and babies. Vitamin D comes from the sun activating vitamin D in skin but, due to the UK's northerly latitude, this only takes place during the summer months. In the UK, all women, including those who are pregnant and breastfeeding are recommended to take a daily vitamin D supplement. This is especially important for:

- women who have darker skin
- women who rarely go outside
- women who cover their skin with clothing or sunscreen
- teenagers and younger women
- women who do not eat animal products, and
- women who eat a very poor diet.

How much vitamin D is needed, and where can supplements be accessed?

A supplement of 10 micrograms (400 IU) of vitamin D a day is recommended, but supplement doses of up to 25 micrograms (1,000 IU) a day can be safely taken. You can buy a vitamin D supplement cheaply at a pharmacy or supermarket.

Women who are eligible for Healthy Start can get free Healthy Start vitamins until their child is 1 year old. (See below for information about Healthy Start.) Healthy Start vitamins contain 10 micrograms of vitamin D, as well as folic acid and vitamin C. The Healthy Start vitamins are suitable for breastfeeding women. They are suitable for vegetarians, but not for vegans. In Scotland, vitamins are provided free to all pregnant women and women with an infant under 1 year.

Women on a vegan diet will need to use a non-animal sourced vitamin D supplement (see below).

Which vitamin D supplements should women take?

	If you are eligible for Healthy Start	If you are not eligible for Healthy Start
All breastfeeding mums, except for vegans	<p>Healthy Start vitamin drops</p> <p>These contain 10 micrograms of vitamin D.</p>	<p>You can buy Healthy Start vitamins from a pharmacy, or take a single vitamin D supplement. 10 micrograms a day is recommended. Note: In Scotland, vitamins are provided free to all women with an infant under 1 year.</p>
Vegan breastfeeding mums	<p>Healthy Start vitamins are not suitable for vegans.</p>	<p>Veg1 supplement</p> <p>Available from the Vegan Society. This contains 20 micrograms of vitamin D from vegan sources.</p> <p>Vitashine vitamin D supplement</p> <p>This contains 1000 IU (equivalent to 25 micrograms) of vitamin D from vegan sources.</p>

Do women need to take any supplements other than vitamin D?

No. Unless women have been prescribed a specific supplement by a GP, the most important thing they can do is eat well to get all the nutrients they need. Taking lots of supplements is associated with poorer health, and more is definitely not better when it comes to most vitamins and minerals. If a woman is planning a further pregnancy, taking a folic acid supplement is also recommended (see page 7). Women can carry on breastfeeding if they are trying for another baby or are pregnant. Information on supplements that may be needed for those following a vegan diet can be found on page 47.

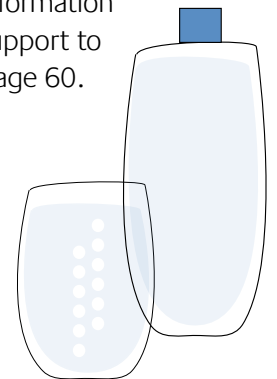
Getting enough calcium

Getting enough calcium in the diet is particularly important for breastfeeding mums. If milk, cheese or yoghurt are consumed, it is easier to get enough calcium in the diet. If dairy foods are not eaten, it is important to include other good sources of calcium in the diet every day. We have suggested a range of additional foods and snacks from both dairy and dairy-free sources on pages 19-42. Many of the dairy-free food and snack suggestions are also good sources of some of the other important nutrients that dairy foods provide, such as iodine, riboflavin and zinc.

Thirst

Making breastmilk uses extra fluid, so women might find they are more thirsty than usual. There is no set amount for how much fluid is needed, as it depends on the weather conditions, the activity level, and the foods eaten. Women should be guided by their thirst. They may want to have a glass of water or a water bottle at hand when they give their baby a feed, to remind them to drink if they are thirsty. Carrying a water bottle when a woman is out and about also makes it easy to have a drink when needed. For information on having drinks such as tea and coffee when breastfeeding, see the next page.

Drinking lots of fluid won't increase milk supply. An effective latch and frequent breastfeeding will increase milk supply. For information on where to find trained support to improve milk supply, see page 60.



Are there some foods that should be limited or avoided when breastfeeding?

Most babies are not affected by the foods a mother consumes, and it is important not to confuse suspected hypersensitivity to food that mum consumes with normal infant behaviour, which can sometimes be unsettled. Most of the myths about foods to avoid are old wives' tales. For example, some people say that eating cabbage or other green vegetables when breastfeeding can make a baby 'gassy', but mums cannot pass 'gas' through milk and this probably came from an idea that the person eating the cabbage might themselves have wind. However, it is likely that what the mum eats will affect the taste of the breastmilk. This makes sense as a way of familiarising the baby with tastes that they will encounter when they move from milk to solid food, and is not a reason to avoid certain foods. All babies will have days when they are fussy, bring up milk after a feed or just seem out of sorts for no particular reason, and some are more sensitive than others. The one thing parents can be sure of is that there is nothing you can put into a sensitive infant's stomach that will be easier to digest than breastmilk.

Cows' milk protein allergy

A small number of babies can be allergic to cows' milk. If a baby is having an immediate reaction to a feed (for example, by being sick, having a rash, a streaming nose, lumps appearing on the body or facial swelling), or a reaction over the longer term (for example, developing eczema, reflux, colic, poor growth, diarrhoea or being reluctant to feed), carers should seek advice from a health visitor or GP. If there is a severe immediate reaction after a feed that impacts on breathing, or if a baby goes floppy, the carer should call 999 for an ambulance.

Advice on how to carry on breastfeeding if a baby is diagnosed with cows' milk allergy can be obtained from an infant feeding specialist health visitor or midwife. Current advice is that women who are breastfeeding a baby with cows' milk allergy should make some changes to their own diet and take a supplement of calcium and vitamin D. (Breastfeeding mums are all recommended to have a vitamin D supplement.) A referral to a dietitian may be possible to support mum's dietary changes and support the infant as they develop. Most infants grow out of cows' milk allergy.

Caffeine

Caffeine can pass through into breastmilk and might affect a baby and may keep them awake. Caffeine is commonly found in coffee, tea and chocolate. It's also added to some soft drinks like cola drinks and energy drinks, and to some cold and flu remedies. The general advice is to have no more than 200mg of caffeine a day in pregnancy and this might be good advice when breastfeeding as well. Decaffeinated tea and coffee taste the same as those with caffeine.

Drinks that contain caffeine –

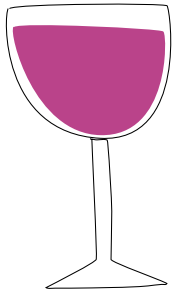
Aim to limit the amount of caffeine you have – in coffee, tea, cola and energy drinks – to no more than 200mg of caffeine a day.

- 1 mug of filter coffee = 140mg
- 1 mug of instant coffee = 100mg
 - 1 mug of tea = 75mg
 - 1 can of cola = 40mg
- 1 can of energy drink = 80mg

Decaffeinated coffee and tea can be drunk freely.

Alcohol

Alcohol passes through to breastfed babies in small amounts, but it's unlikely that having an occasional drink will harm mum or baby. When breastfeeding, it's probably sensible to drink



very little alcohol – for example, no more than 1 or 2 units once or twice a week. One unit of alcohol is approximately a single (25ml) measure of spirits, half a pint of beer, or half a standard (175ml) glass of wine, although it depends on the strength of the drink.

On average, it takes about 2 hours for the body to clear 1 unit of alcohol. If a mum is drinking alcohol, if possible encourage breastfeeding before the alcohol is consumed, or suggest that mums use expressed breastmilk (collected before they consumed alcohol) if they feel they have significant alcohol in their system.

Always consider the care of a baby if the parents are affected by alcohol: alcohol will make people less steady on their feet and will affect judgement. Parents or carers should never go to sleep with a baby in their bed or on a sofa if they have had any alcohol.

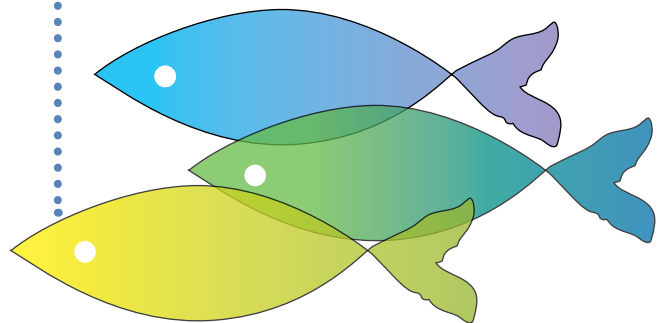
Fish

Eating fish is good for health, but the current advice is to have no more than two portions of oily fish a week. Oily fish includes salmon, mackerel, sardines and trout. Oily fish can contain low levels of pollutants.

Other things to avoid

Calabash chalk is eaten by some pregnant and breastfeeding women in some cultures, but this should be avoided as it is high in lead.

There is debate about the safety of a number of **herbs and supplements** when breastfeeding, and in general the advice is to avoid these in any concentrated form. The amounts of these herbs normally used in cooking are unlikely to be of concern; it's mainly the larger amounts that might be used as supplements that could pose a problem. A few substances have been picked out as potentially dangerous when breastfeeding, such as the herb chasteberry (also called Abraham's Balm or Monk's Pepper and suggested as good for the reproductive system), the supplements conjugated linoleic acid and chitosan, and some Chinese herbal preparations. However, the safest option is to avoid all supplements unless a GP has given specific advice that they are safe.



Special diets

Dairy-free diets

Some mothers follow dairy-free diets either for cultural reasons or because they or their babies have an intolerance to the protein or lactose in cows' or goats' milk. Some cultural groups don't traditionally eat dairy products and need to get their calcium from other foods. Dairy products primarily supply calcium in the Western diet, but they are also a valuable source of protein and some vitamins like vitamin A, vitamin B2 (riboflavin) and vitamin B12. If someone swaps cows' milk for milk alternatives such as soya drink, oat drink, almond milk or coconut milk, the alternative should be unsweetened and calcium-fortified. Most fortified milk alternatives also add some other vitamins and minerals to make them more like animal milk. Fortified plain soya yoghurt can also be used as an alternative to cows' milk yoghurt. If someone eats a dairy-free diet, there are other foods that are good sources of calcium that can be eaten. See *Good sources of vitamins and minerals* on page 58, and the dairy-free snacks and drinks shown on pages 19-42.

Mums who are avoiding dairy products because their baby has a cows' milk allergy are often also advised to avoid soya. If this is the case, instead of using soya drink in recipes, they can use a different milk alternative such as one based on nuts or oats.

Vegetarian diets

It is perfectly possible to get all the nutrients needed from a diet that excludes meat, poultry and fish, as most vegetarians eat eggs, drink milk and have other dairy foods. If someone follows a vegetarian diet, it is important that they eat a range of meat alternatives and to regularly have

eggs, peas, beans, lentils, nuts, soya products and other alternatives to meat. See *Good sources of vitamins and minerals* on page 58.

If you went through pregnancy on a vegetarian diet, you will have had your iron status checked and, if you were prescribed iron tablets, your GP may suggest you carry on with these while you breastfeed.

For more information on vegetarian diets, see the Vegetarian Society website at www.vegsoc.org

Vegan diets

Vegans avoid all animal products so there are some nutrients that vegans are likely to need to get from fortified foods or from supplements. Vegan pregnant women will have been recommended to take a supplement of vitamin B12, vitamin D and iodine during pregnancy, and should continue to take this when breastfeeding.

It is particularly important that vegan mums take a vitamin D supplement when they are breastfeeding. Breastfed babies are recommended to have an 8.5-10 microgram vitamin D supplement from birth.

Vegan mums are advised to seek advice from a health professional to ensure that they are getting all the nutrients they and their baby need. The Vegan Society is also a good source of information (see www.vegansociety.com). Eating well advice for vegan infants and under-5s can be found in

the resource *Eating well: vegan infants and under-5s*, which is available at www.firststepsnutrition.org/eating-well-infants-new-mums



Frequently asked questions

These are just a selection of questions that women have asked about breastfeeding and food and drink. Additional support can be found from the organisations and helplines listed on page 60.

Do I need to eat or drink differently when I breastfeed?

Breastfeeding women, like all new mums, need to eat well to meet their own energy and nutrient needs, and in some cases to prepare their bodies for any future pregnancies. However, human beings are very efficient and, when you have a new baby, your body will absorb nutrients from food more efficiently. This ensures that enough breastmilk is still produced even if a mum's diet is poor. Of course, we want mums to be well nourished too, and many new mums are keen to adopt good eating habits as they know this will help them cope with the demands of being a mum. But even if you have not been eating well, breastfeeding is the best way to feed your baby. Also, it is important to remember that your breastmilk is uniquely suited to your baby and will contain protective factors that infant formula cannot provide.

Can I still breastfeed if I have been skipping meals?

Yes, you can breastfeed your baby even if you have not been eating well. We don't want mums to skip meals and not look after themselves, and it is important to talk to your midwife or health visitor if you are worried about how you are eating or how to access food. But carry on breastfeeding and try and eat as well as you can. If you are on a low income, you might be eligible to receive Healthy Start or Best Start Foods food vouchers and free vitamins (see page 7). Your midwife or health visitor can tell you about this and can signpost you to other support if you are struggling to eat well.

I'm worried that I'm not producing enough milk for my baby. Who can I talk to about this?

If you have any questions or concerns about breastfeeding, there are lots of places you can turn to for help. See page 60 for a list of national organisations and helplines, and ask your health visitor or midwife for local contact information. Any question you have is valid and you really can ask breastfeeding supporters anything. Anyone who has been in your shoes will understand and really want to help!

I'm on a low income. Is it true that I can get food vouchers when I'm breastfeeding?

If you are on a low income and are eligible for Healthy Start or Best Start Foods vouchers, you can use these when you are breastfeeding to buy fruit, vegetables, pulses, eggs (in Scotland only), and cows' milk. Funds to buy specific foods are provided via vouchers or a card, and vitamins are also provided free. (In Scotland vitamins are free for all pregnant women and new mums.) You can still eat well on a budget. The resource *Making the most of Healthy Start and Best Start Foods* offers advice on how to eat well using Healthy Start and Best Start Foods vouchers and contains lots of cost-effective recipes. It is available at www.firststepsnutrition.org/healthy-start

Is it true that, if my baby has colic, I should drink less milk and avoid dairy foods?

It is unlikely that colic in your baby is related to what you eat or drink, but always talk to your health visitor or midwife if you are concerned that your baby might have cows' milk allergy (see page 49). Colic – where babies cry persistently in the early weeks of life, often in the evenings – is common and while it is not harmful, it can be distressing for families. If you are breastfeeding, there are some simple things you can try to reduce colic: changing the position you use when feeding, giving smaller and more frequent feeds, rocking and soothing your baby, and holding your baby and offering comfort. You can get advice on managing colic from anyone who supports breastfeeding mums (see page 60). It is not true that using a special type of infant formula can reduce colic in babies.

I am breastfeeding twins. Do I need extra energy and nutrients?

If you are exclusively breastfeeding twins, you are likely to feel more hungry and may find you need to eat and drink more during the day to maintain your weight. Talk to your health visitor or midwife if you are concerned about how to manage your own diet during this very busy time.

I am being sick. Is it safe to carry on breastfeeding?

Yes. Your milk will help protect your baby from getting the same illness, or will at least make it milder. As with most illnesses, the antibodies you are making to fight the infection will be passed to your baby through your breastmilk.

If you are vomiting and/or have diarrhoea, try drinking water or other clear drinks to help you keep your fluid levels up. Even small amounts of fluid taken regularly will help. You don't need to eat food to keep making milk. Your breasts may feel softer, but you will still have enough milk. When you are ill, your baby may want to feed for shorter times but more often. If you feel ill, stay in bed (if you can) to feed your baby.

See your GP if you are not feeling better in a few days.

Can I breastfeed if I have diabetes?

If you have diabetes – either before your pregnancy or if you were diagnosed with gestational diabetes during pregnancy – you can breastfeed just the same as women who do not have diabetes. To make sure you get off to a good start, it is useful to talk to a trained breastfeeding counsellor before you give birth, so that you can be prepared for any challenges in the first few days.

Breastmilk contains lactose – a milk sugar. Breastfeeding mothers will therefore be transferring lactose to their baby during each breastfeed, resulting in the mother's blood sugar lowering after feeds. You will have been given antenatal and postnatal information and support about managing diabetes while breastfeeding. Diabetes UK recommends that breastfeeding women aim to consume around 40-50g more starchy foods a day to manage 'losses' due to breastfeeding, and in some cases they may need to lower their insulin requirement. Make sure you have a plan in place with the diabetes team. While your sugar levels can influence the lactose in your milk, the diabetic medication you take – such as insulin, metformin and sulphonylureas – should not directly affect your baby.

Is it true that, if I breastfeed, I'm more likely to get back to the weight I was before my pregnancy?

Yes. You may find it takes a while to return to your pre-pregnancy weight, but evidence suggests that, after three to four months, most breastfeeding women are slimmer than formula-feeding women who eat fewer calories. For more on weight, see page 14.

Can I eat liver or have liver pâté when breastfeeding?

Yes. There is no risk to your baby if you eat these foods, and liver is a cheap and very nutritious food that many people enjoy. Pregnant women, however, are advised to avoid liver and liver pâté as these foods are very high in vitamin A which may harm a growing baby.

Is it sensible to diet when breastfeeding?

Breastfeeding your baby is a really good way to get back to your pre-pregnancy weight, especially if you breastfeed for the first six months or more. In the first two months after giving birth, you should give your body time to recover from the birth and get breastfeeding well established, so eating healthily and introducing gentle activity into your day should be your priority. If you're worried about your weight and size, talk to your midwife, health visitor or GP, as there is specific advice for mums after they have given birth. Every mum wants the best for their baby, and your baby needs a happy mum who can offer them a safe, loving environment and this is likely to be your priority rather than getting back into a specific size of clothes in the early months. If you are advised to reduce your energy intake to lose weight, you will still be able to make the best breastmilk for your baby.

I drink lots of diet cola drinks. Does it matter if I carry on when I breastfeed?

Most cola drinks, whether they are branded or supermarket own brands, contain about 10mg of caffeine per 100ml. A can or bottle of cola contains between 30mg and 50mg of caffeine. So, if you drink a lot of these drinks, you can get a lot of caffeine, and if you also have some tea or coffee, you might end up having quite high intakes of caffeine. Some breastfeeding mums find that when they consume high levels of caffeine it makes their baby unsettled and irritable. Some colas don't have any caffeine in them and you can check the label to find out which ones these are. Drinking lots of diet drinks is also damaging to teeth, as these drinks contain acid, which damages the enamel of the teeth. There is also some evidence that people who drink a lot of diet drinks actually find it harder to stay slim than those who don't. Too much of any one food or drink is generally a bad idea, so try swapping some of your diet cola drinks for drinks of water, milk or one of the other nutritious drinks suggested in this resource.

Do I need to avoid spicy food?

If you enjoy spicy food, there is no reason to avoid it when you are breastfeeding. Few babies react to what mum eats and, if breastmilk takes on a different flavour, this is all part of nature's way of getting your baby used to life in your family!

If I eat foods like unpasteurised cheese or sushi, can I pass listeria on to my baby?

You cannot pass listeria on through breastmilk to your baby and there is no reason for breastfeeding mums to avoid these foods, as long as the usual food safety rules are followed. For advice on which foods and drinks you should limit or avoid when breastfeeding, see page 49.

Pregnant women are advised to avoid foods that might carry the food bacteria listeria and so unpasteurised milk and cheese, some blue cheeses, raw fish and shellfish and undercooked meats or meals should all be avoided during pregnancy.

If I eat junk food and take-aways, will this affect my baby's health?

No. You will still produce breastmilk, which is the best choice for your baby whatever your diet. Obviously a diet high in foods with lots of fat, salt and sugar in them is not a good choice long term for anyone, and we want mums to be healthy too, but your body has an amazing ability to produce breastmilk regardless of how good your own diet is. For advice on what a healthy diet looks like for women, see the resource *Eating well recipe book* (see page 7).

Can herbal remedies increase milk supply?

Many cultures around the world have used herbal preparations to promote milk supply over many centuries, but there is little clear evidence that they work. Some of those preparations typically promoted include fenugreek, alfalfa, blessed thistle, fennel and anise, as well as mixed herbal teas. Some herbs can cause tummy disturbances but are often safe when consumed as 'teas' where the herb is covered in boiling water and then the tea is drunk. The most important thing is that any herbal preparation you take should be safe, and it is a good idea to talk to your pharmacist before taking any non-food preparation. There are also some medicines that can be prescribed to increase milk supply, but most women can produce enough milk if their baby is latched on effectively, if they let their baby feed frequently (including at night in the early days), and if the mother gets plenty of rest and fluid. Avoid the herb chasteberry (also called Abraham's Balm or Monk's Pepper and suggested as good for the reproductive system), the supplements conjugated linoleic acid and chitosan. Be careful with Chinese herbal preparations and make sure you check these with a pharmacist.

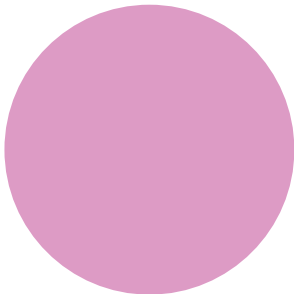
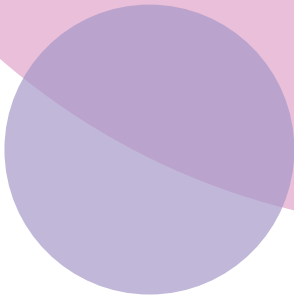
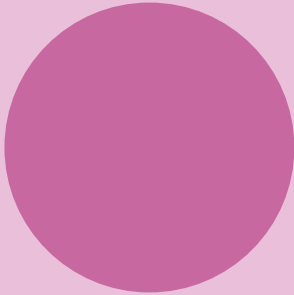
Will 'lactation cookies' help me make more breastmilk?

There is no evidence that eating lactation cookies will help with your milk supply, and taking these might stop you getting the proper advice you need to increase your milk supply. Some of the ingredients used may be harmful for some women, or may interact with medicines. These cookies are also expensive, and families can buy some lovely real food instead. If you are worried about milk supply, talk to a breastfeeding counsellor.

When should I start to give my baby food other than milk?

The advice in the UK is that most babies should start being offered some foods complementary to breastmilk at about 6 months of age. Some babies may be ready for foods a bit before, and some a bit after 6 months, but make sure complementary foods are introduced no later than 7 months of age.

Additional information



Good sources of vitamins and minerals

Vitamin A

Animal sources

butter
canned salmon
cheese
egg
full-fat milk
herrings
kidney
liver *
pilchards canned in tomato sauce
smoked mackerel

Non-animal sources

apricots (dried, fresh or canned)
blackcurrants
broad beans
broccoli
Brussels sprouts
cabbage (dark)
cantaloupe melon
carrots
honeydew melon
mango
margarine
nectarine
orange
peach
peas
prunes
red peppers
runner beans
spinach
sweet potatoes
sweetcorn
tomatoes
watercress

* Avoid liver and liver products if you are pregnant.

Riboflavin

Also called vitamin B2

Animal sources

cheese
eggs
kidney
lean meat or poultry
mackerel
milk
pilchards
salmon
sardines
tuna
yoghurt

Non-animal sources

almonds
fortified breakfast cereals
granary bread
mushrooms
soya beans
spinach
wheatgerm bread

Folic acid

'Folic acid' is the name given to the synthetic form of the B vitamins known as folates, but is used as a general term here for this vitamin.

broccoli
Brussels sprouts
cabbage
cauliflower
fortified breakfast cereals
green leafy salads
melon
oranges
parsnips

peanuts
peas
potatoes
runner beans
spinach
tomatoes
wholemeal bread
yeast extract

Calcium

Dairy sources

milk
cheese
cheese spread
yoghurt
fromage frais

Non-dairy sources

canned salmon
dried fruit
egg yolk
muesli
orange
peas, beans and lentils
pilchards, sardines
soya drink fortified with calcium
spinach
tofu
white bread / flour

Iron

Animal sources

All meat and meat products provide iron, but very good sources include darker meats and meat products made from beef, lamb, duck, venison, and offal meats such as heart, liver *, kidney, oxtail and tongue.

Oil-rich fish – including herrings, pilchards, sardines, salmon, whitebait and tuna – are also a good source of iron.

Eggs (particularly egg yolk) are also a good source.

* Avoid liver and liver products if you are pregnant.

Non-animal sources

baked beans
blackcurrants
black-eyed peas
broad beans
broccoli
chick peas
dried apricots
fortified breakfast cereals
lentils
raisins
soya beans
spinach
spring greens
tofu
weet bisks
white bread
wholemeal bread/flour

Iodine

Dairy sources

butter
cheese
fromage frais
milk
ice cream
yoghurt

Non-dairy sources

egg
fish
fish paste
seaweed
shellfish

Zinc

Animal sources

canned sardines
canned tuna or pilchards
cheese
cold cooked meats
eggs
ham
kidney
lean meat
liver*
milk
poultry
shrimps and prawns

Non-animal sources

beans and lentils
brown or wholemeal bread
nuts
plain popcorn
sesame seeds
tofu
wholegrain breakfast cereals, such as puffed wheat, branflakes or weet bisks

* Avoid liver and liver products if you are pregnant.

For more information

Breastfeeding helplines

National Breastfeeding Helpline

(English, Welsh and Polish)
0300 100 0212

The National Breastfeeding Helpline is run in collaboration with the Breastfeeding Network and the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers.

La Leche League GB

0345 120 2918

NCT Support Line

0300 330 0700

Useful organisations and sources of information

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers

T: 08444 122 948
Helpline: 0300 330 5453
E: info@abm.me.uk
www.abm.me.uk

This charity offers extensive support to parents around breastfeeding and a range of factsheets and resources as well as a helpline. Information is available on a wide range of topics such as expressing breastmilk, breastfeeding twins, breastfeeding older children, and the roles of parents and grandparents.

The Baby Café

www.thebabycafe.org

Coordinates a network of breastfeeding drop-in centres and other services to support breastfeeding mothers.

Baby Milk Action (IBFAN UK)

T: 01223 464420
www.babymilkaction.org

Baby Milk Action (IBFAN UK) is a campaigning organisation that protects breastfeeding by highlighting inappropriate marketing of breastmilk substitutes. Baby Milk Action works within a global network to strengthen independent, transparent and effective controls on the marketing of the baby feeding industry.

Best Beginnings

T: 020 7443 7895
E: info@bestbeginnings.org.uk
www.bestbeginnings.org.uk

Best Beginnings is a charity working to end child health inequalities in the UK. It offers information about pregnancy, birth, mental health, premature and sick babies, and breastfeeding.

Their DVD *From bump to breastfeeding*, which follows real mothers' stories, shows parents how to get started with breastfeeding and provides practical answers to common problems. It can be viewed in seven languages including Urdu, Bengali and Somali. Sections of the DVD are available as video clips from www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/fbtb. The website also has videos on: *Breastfeeding twins or more*; and *Breastfeeding your sick or pre-term baby*.

Baby Buddy is a free mobile phone app for parents and parents-to-be, covering pregnancy and the first six months after birth. It delivers personalised pregnancy and parenting information and prompts for reflection and action. The app is available to download from the App Store or Google Play.

Best Start Foods

<https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods/>

Information about the Scottish welfare food scheme.

Bliss

T: 020 7378 1122
E: hello@bliss.org.uk
www.bliss.org.uk

Bliss is a special care charity which provides information about feeding babies born too soon, too small, or too sick.

The Breastfeeding Network

T: 0844 412 0995
Helpline: 0300 100 0212
www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

The Breastfeeding Network is a UK charity that provides evidence-based information and support for breastfeeding women and their families. It does not take funding from sources with an interest in commercial feeding.

Some useful factsheets are:

Expressing and storing breast milk

<https://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/breastfeeding-help/expressing-storing/>

Mastitis and breastfeeding

www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/dibm/BFN%20Mastitis%20Feb%2016.pdf

How safe is ...? Alcohol, smoking, medicines and breastfeeding

www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/wp-content/pdfs/BfN_how_safe_is_leaflet_2009.pdf

The Breastfeeding Network also runs the **Drugs in Breastmilk Information Service** (see below).

Drugs in Breastmilk Information Service

www.facebook.com/BfNDrugsinBreastmilkinformation

The Drugs in Breastmilk Information Service Facebook page provides information on medication use when breastfeeding.

Factsheets are available at:

www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/drugs-factsheets/

For help with specific questions about medicines or treatments, email:

druginformation@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

First Steps Nutrition Trust

See page 64 for information on eating well produced by First Steps Nutrition Trust.

Healthy Start

www.healthystart.nhs.uk

Healthy Start is the welfare food scheme for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, which provides free vitamins and food vouchers for low-income families.

Institute of Health Visiting

www.ihv.org.uk

The Institute of Health Visiting provides useful fact sheets and training for health visitors, and fact sheets for families.

Lactation Consultants of Great Britain

www.lcgb.org

E: info@lcgb.org

Lactation Consultants of Great Britain is the association for those with the qualification of the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). It specialises in promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding and lactation issues. It is an affiliate member of ILCA (International Lactation Consultants Association). To find your nearest IBCLC, go to www.lcgb.org/find-an-ibclc/f

La Leche League GB

Helpline: 0345 120 2918

www.laleche.org.uk

La Leche League GB is a support network that offers information and encouragement, mainly through mother-to-mother support, to all women who want to breastfeed their babies. It holds regular meetings, open to mothers, all over the UK. To find your nearest La Leche League breastfeeding mothers' group, go to www.laleche.org.uk/find-ill-support-group/

For information on a wide range of topics related to breastfeeding, see:

www.laleche.org.uk/get-support/#bfinfo

Maternity Action

Maternity Action Maternity Rights Advice Line:

0808 802 0029

www.maternityaction.org.uk

Maternity Action is committed to ending inequality and improving the health and well-being of pregnant women, partners and young children from conception through to the child's early years. They also support the rights of women to breastfeed in the workplace.

Multiple Births Foundation

T: 020 3313 3519

www.multiplebirths.org.uk

The Multiple Births Foundation supports multiple-birth families. They have produced free feeding guidelines for parents and carers. Their booklet *Feeding twins, triplets and more* is available for download at: www.multiplebirths.org.uk/MBFParentsFeedingGuideFINALVERSION.pdf

National Breastfeeding Helpline

National Breastfeeding Helpline

T: 0300 100 0212 (available in English, Welsh and Polish)

The National Breastfeeding Helpline is open from 9.30am - 9.30pm every day of the year. It offers independent, confidential, mother-centred, non-judgemental information and support about breastfeeding. The helpline is run in collaboration with the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers and the Breastfeeding Network and is funded by Public Health England and the Scottish Government. A web chat service is also available.

NCT

T: 0844 243 6000

NCT Support Line: 0300 330 0700

www.nct.org.uk

The NCT is a national parenting charity that offers advice and information on breastfeeding, including a helpline. A full list of their factsheets is available at: www.nct.org.uk/parenting. You can choose information targeted at babies from 0-3 months; 3-6 months; 6-9 months; 9-12 months; 12-18 months; and 18-24 months.

NHS

www.nhs.uk

The NHS information site has information on all aspects of breastfeeding at www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby

Parent Club

www.parentclub.scot/

Parent Club offers up-to-date guidance from the Scottish Government on infant and child health and education. It has hints and tips from other parents and carers, and offers advice to help families look after their own wellbeing and find support available.

Public Health Agency (Northern Ireland)

Off to a good start: All you need to know about breastfeeding your baby

www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/2020-04/Off%20to%20a%20good%20start%20jan%202020%20-%20Bookmarks_0.pdf

What dads should know about breastfeeding

www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/What_dads_should_know_03_15.pdf

Public Health Wales

Bilingual resources (in English and Welsh) on breastfeeding can be accessed at

www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/61619/

Bump, Baby & Beyond (In English and Welsh)

www.wales.nhs.uk/documents/Pregnancy%20to%204%20Years%20Book%20FINAL%20English%20Revised%20E-Book%20Compressed.pdf

A book that provides parents with support from the early stages of pregnancy, through to the early days with your baby and into the toddler years.

Ready, Steady, Baby

www.readysteadybaby.org.uk

NHS Health Scotland website covering the time from deciding to have a baby, through pregnancy and birth, and up until your baby is 12 months.

Royal College of Midwives

T: 0300 303 0444

E: info@rcm.org.uk

www.rcm.org.uk

Start4Life

www.nhs.uk/start4life

For information on breastfeeding, including how to know if your baby is feeding well, how families and carers can support breastfeeding, and breastfeeding out and about, see:

www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/breastfeeding/

Twins Trust

<https://twinstrust.org/>

T: 01252 332 344

Feeding

<https://twinstrust.org/let-us-help/parenting/under-1s/feeding.html>

Information on feeding twins, triplets and more.

Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative

T: 020 7375 6052

E: bf@unicef.org.uk

www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/

The Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative website contains useful information and advice on all aspects of breastfeeding. It provides resources for parents at: www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/leaflets-and-posters/

It also provides free access to research on infant feeding, including on topics such as: breastfeeding and skin to skin; breastfeeding and breast cancer; breastfeeding and tongue tie; and breastfeeding and allergy. See: www.unicef.org.uk/BabyFriendly/News-and-Research/Research

Off to the best start

www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2010/11/otbs_leaflet.pdf

A downloadable booklet produced jointly by Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative and the Department of Health. It provides information about all aspects of breastfeeding, including for multiple births. Printed copies are available for free by phoning the DH Publications Orderline on 0300 123 1002.

Breastfeeding at study or work – information for employees and employers

www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/breastfeeding-resources/breastfeeding-at-study-or-work/

Guide to bottle feeding

Infant formula and responsive bottle feeding:

A guide for parents

Both of these are available at:

www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2008/02/start4life_guide_to_bottle_feeding.pdf

Infant formula and responsive bottle feeding

An overview on how to bottle feed responsively and, for parents who are formula feeding, how to choose an infant formula.

www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/04/Infant-formula-and-responsive-bottle-feeding.pdf

Support for postnatal depression

Association for Postnatal Illness

Helpline: 020 7386 0868

www.apni.org

Provides a telephone helpline, information leaflets and a network of volunteers who have themselves experienced postnatal depression.

Best Beginnings

www.bestbeginnings.org.uk

The Baby Buddy App produced by Best Beginnings has a series of films to support women from their 'Out of the Blue' project.

<https://www.bestbeginnings.org.uk/out-of-the-blue>

Cry-sis

Helpline: 08451 228669

www.cry-sis.org.uk

Provides self-help and support for families with excessively crying and sleepless and demanding babies.

Home-Start

T: 0800 068 6368.

www.home-start.org.uk

Home-Start provides support and practical help for families with at least one child under 5. It offers help to parents finding it hard to cope for many reasons, including postnatal depression or other mental illness, isolation, bereavement, or illness of a parent or child.

Maternal Mental Health Alliance

www.maternalmentalhealthalliance.org

Their website includes information about Mums and Babies in Mind projects across the UK. See:

www.maternalmentalhealthalliance.org/resources/mothers-and-families/

Pandas Foundation

Helpline (open 9am to 8pm): 0843 2898401

www.pandasfoundation.org.uk

An organisation that helps individuals and their families with pre- and postnatal depression advice and support. They also offer support to families in the antenatal period.

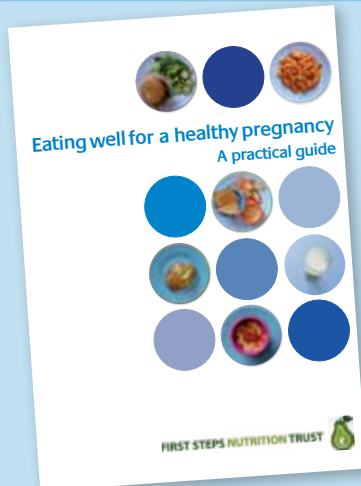
First Steps Nutrition Trust – Useful resources

The information in all our resources is in line with current policy and has been reviewed by experts in the field.

All our resources are available as free pdfs to download at www.firststepsnutrition.org

Hard copies are available at cost price from www.fbsresources.com

Supporting women in pregnancy and new mums



This guide enables health professionals to support pregnant women about food, nutrition and pregnancy. It includes recipes and meal ideas and can sit alongside other local public health guidance to provide a practical explanation of what 'eating well' looks like in practice.

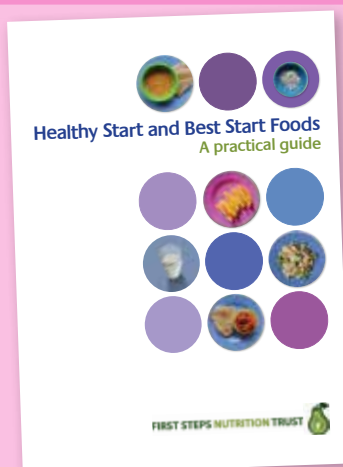


This practical guide illustrates what a good diet looks like for young women in pregnancy. The advice is tailored to women aged 15-19 years and provides practical ideas on how to eat well cost-effectively. It includes photos and recipes, all of which have been tested and costed.



This resource encourages all new mums to eat well and summarises current thinking on food, nutrition and breastfeeding. It provides photos and recipes for a range of simple, nutritious light meals and snacks perfect for busy mums on the go.

Supporting low-income families

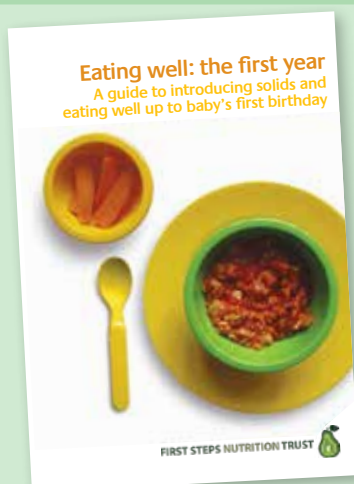


This resource explains the Healthy Start and Best Start Foods schemes and how families eligible for this scheme can be supported. The resource gives examples of how the food vouchers can be spent, with recipes and advice for health professionals who support families in their areas.

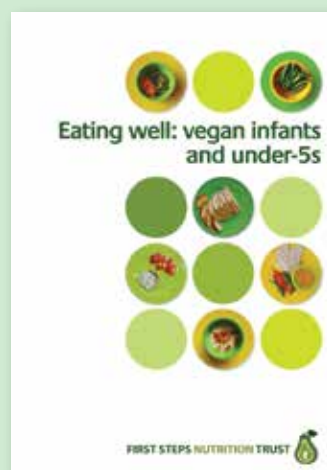


Simple cost-effective recipes for the whole family and tips on how to eat well on a budget and with limited equipment. Recipes show how adults, teenagers, school-aged children, under-5s and infants can all eat well from the same recipes.

Supporting new families



This resource explains how to safely introduce solids and how to encourage eating well in the second six months of life. The resource provides recipes, suggested portion sizes and lots of practical tips.



This resource summarises how vegan infants (and their mums) and children under 5 can be supported to eat well. It provides simple, cost-effective and tested recipes that can be used in early years settings or in the home, and clear information on how to support vegan dietary choices.

Supporting 1-4 year olds and early years settings



This guide outlines how families and early years settings can prepare packed lunches which meet the energy and nutrient needs of young children, using cost-effective choices that meet a wide range of needs.



This pictorial guide shows the sorts of foods, and amounts of foods that can be offered to 1-4 year olds to encourage eating well as part of a healthy meal plan.



This resource gives information on healthy snacks to give to 1-4 year olds.

Index

A

activity 15
alcohol 50

B

Best Start Foods 7
breastfeeding 44

C

caffeine 49
Calabash chalk 50
calcium 48
cheese 11, 55
colic 53
complementary feeding 55
cows' milk allergy 49

D

dairy products 11
dairy-free diets 51
diabetes 53
dieting when breastfeeding 54
drinking 48
drinks 18, 19, 48

E

eatwell plate 8
energy requirements 18, 45
exercise 15

F

fish 12, 50
fluid 48
formula feeding 6
fruit 10

G

garlic 55

H

Healthy Start 7
helplines 60
herbal remedies 55

I

infant formula 6

M

meat 12
menu plans 16
milk products 11
minerals 58

P

post-pregnancy weight loss 14, 54
pregnancy 14

S

sickness 53
snacks 18, 19
special diets 51
spicy food 54
starchy foods 9
supplements 7, 47, 48, 50, 55
sushi 55

T

take-aways 55
thirst 48
twins 53

V

vegans 51
vegetables 10
vegetarians 51
vitamin D supplements 7, 47, 51
vitamins 7, 58
vomiting 53

W

weight 14, 54



FIRST STEPS NUTRITION TRUST



www.firststepsnutrition.org

Eating well for new mums

ISBN 978-1-908924-46-9 (e-book)

ISBN 978-1-908924-42-1 (hard copy)