

Nourishing New Moms:

Simple Guidance for Breastfeeding and Postpartum Health

Energy & Nutrient Needs

Becoming a new mom is exciting—and exhausting! Your body needs extra energy and nutrients while breastfeeding to support both you and your baby.

Calories:

- Breastfeeding moms typically need 330–400 extra calories per day, though needs vary. Listen to your hunger cues and consult your healthcare provider for personalized guidance.

Daily Food Recommendations for Breastfeeding Moms

FOOD GROUP	DAILY AMOUNT
Vegetables	3 cups
Fruits	2 cups
Dairy	3 cups
Protein	6-6.5 oz
Grains	7-8 oz

If using combination feeding (breast + formula):

- Protein: 6 oz
- Grains: 7 oz

Examples of serving sizes:

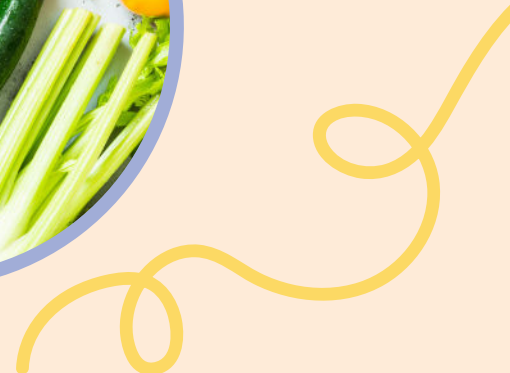
- Grains: 1 slice bread, 1 cup cooked cereal, ½ cup cooked pasta or rice
- Protein: 1 oz meat/fish/poultry, 1 egg, ¼ cup beans, ½ oz nuts, 1 Tbsp peanut butter
- Dairy: 1 cup milk, 8 oz yogurt, 1.5 oz cheese, 2 oz processed cheese

Key Nutrients:

- Iodine: dairy, eggs, seafood, iodized salt
- Choline: eggs, meats, seafood, beans, peas, lentils

Tips:

- Follow USDA MyPlate guidance for balanced meals.
- No “special” foods are needed—variety matters most.
- Frequent snacks can help meet extra caloric needs.
- Work with a physician to determine if supplements are necessary.



Fluids, Alcohol & Milk Supply



Hydration:

- Drink plenty of water—fruits and vegetables also contribute to fluid intake.
- Make hydration enjoyable: try infused water (mint, strawberry, cucumber, lemon) or herbal teas.
- Limit sugary drinks and soda.

Caffeine:

- Moderate intake (2–3 cups of coffee or tea per day) is usually safe.
- Excess caffeine can make babies fussy or interfere with sleep.

Alcohol:

- Avoid alcohol when possible.
- If you drink, wait 2–3 hours before nursing.
- Standard drink equivalents:
 - 12 oz beer (5%)
 - 8 oz malt liquor (7%)
 - 5 oz wine (12%)
 - 1.5 oz liquor (40%)

Important Notes:

- Alcohol level in breast milk mirrors blood alcohol level.
- Pumping and discarding milk does not speed up alcohol elimination.
- Wait the recommended time or feed previously expressed milk to reduce infant exposure.

Milk Supply:

- Milk production works on supply-and-demand.
- Eating specific foods does not increase milk supply.
- Focus on a well-rounded, nutrient-rich diet.



Postpartum Physical Activity

Gentle activity supports recovery, improves mood, boosts sleep, and may reduce postpartum depression.

Recommendations:

- Aerobic activity: 150 minutes/week
- Muscle strengthening: 2× per week
- Any movement counts: walking with stroller, light stretches, gardening, house chores

Tips:

- Start slow and increase gradually.
- Focus on health, not weight loss—your body adjusts at its own pace.

