

## Multivitamin Use Before, During, and After Pregnancy

- Take a multivitamin that has **0.4 mg of folic acid** (and no more than 1.0 mg) if you are pregnant or could become pregnant.
- While you are pregnant, make sure your daily multivitamin also contains **16 to 20 mg of iron**.
- If you do not eat foods that contain vitamin D every day, take a supplement containing **400 IU (10 mcg) of vitamin D**.
- Check that your multivitamin has **no more than 1000 IU of vitamin A**.



## A healthcare provider can help find the right multivitamin if:

- The choice of diet does not include milk or animal products like meat or eggs, as there might be a higher need for calcium, vitamin D, and vitamin B12
- Other vitamins, supplements, or herbal remedies are being used
- There is difficulty in accessing prenatal multivitamins; some pharmacies and community prenatal programs offer free prenatal multivitamins

## Tips to Help with Nausea

Prevent yourself from getting too hungry by having a small snack between meals and at bedtime, such as:

- Graham crackers and peanut butter
- Fruit and cottage cheese
- Apple and slice of cheese
- Crackers and hummus

Include some protein with meals, snacks, and at bedtime. Foods with protein include:

- Hard boiled eggs
- Cottage cheese and Greek yogurt
- Peanut butter
- Beans and legumes (chickpeas, lentils)
- Meat (beef, chicken, lamb, pork, venison, moose, bison, elk, other wild game)

## Eating Well for Less

Eating healthier does not always have to cost more.

- Choose frozen or canned foods.
- Choose plant proteins like beans or lentils.
- Shop for sale or discounted items.
- Choose store-branded foods instead of brand name products.
- Stick to your list when shopping.

## Resources

Prenatal programs that offer nutrition counselling, prenatal vitamins, food and food coupons, food preparation training, and more may be available in your community. **Scan the QR code to see a list of helpful resources.**

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our goal is **healthy** children



For more information contact:

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Essential  
**Foods**  
for a Healthy Pregnancy

## Eating Well During Pregnancy

It is important to eat a variety of healthy foods each day. Eating foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and proteins helps to keep you and your growing baby strong. Choose foods with less salt, sugar, and saturated fat. Limit highly processed foods.

**You do not need to eat extra food in the first trimester.** Eat a bit more in the second and third trimesters to support baby's growth.

## Healthy Drink Options During Pregnancy

- Choose water, white milk, or fortified plant beverages.
- Limit caffeine to 300 mg in total per day. This is about 2 cups (8 oz or 237 mL each) of coffee. Caffeine is present in many other foods and drinks (e.g., tea, chocolate, some soft drinks, energy drinks, and certain herbs).
- Non-herbal teas (rooibos) are safe to drink during pregnancy. Herbal teas such as citrus peel, ginger, orange peel, and rose hip, are safe in moderation (two to three cups per day). Some teas are not safe to drink when you are pregnant so be sure to read the label.
- Avoid alcohol; no alcohol is the safest choice for your growing baby.

## Healthy eating is more than just the food you eat!

- Plan a meal and snack routine using nutritious foods you enjoy.
- Eat foods that are important for your culture and traditions.
- Be mindful of your eating habits and avoid distractions while eating.
- Eat meals with others.



## Important Nutrients Before, During, and After Pregnancy

**Folate (folic acid)** is important for the development of the brain, spine, and skull of the baby. Folate lowers the risk of neural tube defects in a growing baby. Foods with folate include:

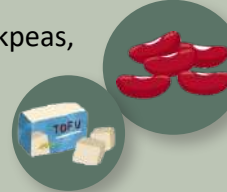
- Leafy green vegetables (romaine lettuce, spinach)
- Pasta, bread, cereal (with added folate)
- Beans and legumes (chickpeas, lentils)
- Nuts and seeds (sunflower seeds, peanuts)



**Iron** gives the baby oxygen to help them grow. Animal sources of iron are easier for the body to use than plant sources.

Foods with iron include:

- Meat (beef, chicken, lamb, pork, venison, moose, bison, elk, other wild game)
- Cereals and grains with added iron (pasta, bread)
- Beans and legumes (chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans)
- Tofu
- Eggs



**Eating food with vitamin C helps your body use iron.** Foods with vitamin C include vegetables and fruit (broccoli, strawberries, oranges, lemons, tomatoes, potatoes).



**Vitamin B12** is important for healthy blood.

Foods with vitamin B12 include:

- Meat (beef, chicken, pork, lamb, venison, moose, bison, elk, other wild game)
- Eggs
- Dairy products (cow's milk, cheese)
- Plant-based beverages with vitamin B12 added
- Nutritional yeast



**Calcium** is important for the development of the baby's bones and teeth. Foods with calcium include:

- Cow's milk
- Plant-based beverages that have calcium added
- Cheese and yogurt
- Cooked sardines



**Vitamin D** helps the body to use calcium. Foods with vitamin D include:

- Fish (herring, rainbow trout, salmon)
- Cow's milk
- Plant-based beverages with vitamin D added
- Margarine



**Omega-3 fatty acids** are important for the development of the baby's brain and eyes. Try to eat 5 oz or 140 g of cooked fish per week. Omega-3-rich fish that are low in mercury include:

- Fresh fish (Atlantic mackerel, salmon, walleye under 34 cm, trout)
- Canned fish (light tuna, sardines, herring)
- Seafood (shrimp and clams)



**Fibre** can help relieve common pregnancy side effects such as constipation and heartburn.

Foods with fibre include:

- Fruits and vegetables (berries, broccoli, green peas)
- Whole grains (bread, pasta, whole wheat bannock)
- Beans and legumes (chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans)

