

Eating & Well-Being During Pregnancy

Eating well and caring for your body is essential for a healthy pregnancy. Good nutrition helps you feel your best while providing your baby with important nutrients for growth and development. Key nutrients like folate (folic acid) and iron are vital during this time.

Key Nutrition Tips



LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

- Include your culture, food traditions, and taste preferences in your diet.
- Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues.
- Add an extra snack or small meal in the 2nd and 3rd trimesters
- Speak to a healthcare provider if you are not able to eat a variety of foods due to nausea or vomiting.



BUILD HEALTHY EATING HABITS

- Be mindful of your eating habits.
- Enjoy your meals; try to eat with others.



MAKE NUTRITIOUS CHOICES

- Include a variety of vegetables and fruits.
- Eat protein-rich foods.
- Choose whole-grain foods.
- Drink plenty of water.



BE CAUTIOUS WITH CERTAIN FOODS

- Limit caffeine to 300 mg per day (about two 8-oz cups of coffee).
- Choose fish low in mercury, such as salmon or light canned tuna.



FOLLOW FOOD SAFE PRACTICES

Avoid these foods:

- Unpasteurized milk, juice, and soft cheeses
- Raw or undercooked meat, fish, and eggs
- Deli meat, hot dogs, and sprouts (unless heated/cooked)

How can you meet your nutrient needs?

FOLATE NEEDS:

Enjoy leafy greens often and take a daily prenatal multivitamin with at least 0.4 mg folic acid.

IRON NEEDS:

Include iron-rich foods at each meal such as meat, poultry, cooked shellfish and fish, eggs, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils, tofu, fortified whole grain cereals, or dark leafy greens.

ACCESS CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE, RECIPES, TIPS, AND MORE

food-guide.canada.ca



Supporting your well-being during pregnancy

Physical Health

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Move your body in ways that feels good, take breaks, and stay active for you and your baby. Aim for 2.5 hours of moderate activity each week.

Spread it out over a few days and listen to your body. Some movement is better than none. Start small and increase gradually.



ORAL HEALTH

Take care of your teeth—schedule a dental check-up in your first trimester if possible.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Keep your space smoke- and vape-free for a healthier pregnancy. Avoid alcohol and cannabis—there is no known safe amount during pregnancy.

Emotional and Mental Health

Pregnancy brings big changes to your body, mind, and daily life. Having support makes a difference.

- Build a circle of support—family, friends, a doula, a counsellor, postpartum support groups, public health units or healthcare providers. Reach out if you need support or have concerns.
- Maintain a sleep schedule, rest when possible, and practice relaxation.
- Embrace your body's strength as it changes during pregnancy and after birth.



Financial Health

Pregnancy and parenting can bring extra costs. There are programs that can help.

Connect with local pregnancy outreach programs, women's centres, health centres, or public health units.



Scan the QR code to see the [Financial Help for Pregnancy](#) handout and find out what support you may be eligible for.



Getting Ready for Birth & Baby

Read [Baby's Best Chance](#), a handbook for soon-to-be or new parents.

PLAN YOUR BIRTH PREFERENCES

Consider your birth preferences and share them with your health care team. Think about what you want, as well as backup options if things don't go as planned.

FEEDING YOUR BABY

Consider how you'd like to feed your baby and discuss any questions with your health care provider.

STOCK UP ON ESSENTIALS

Prepare frozen meals and stock your pantry with quick snacks to have on hand before baby arrives.



Call 8-1-1 or visit [HealthLink BC](#) to talk to a Registered Nurse, Registered Dietitian, Exercise Professional, or Pharmacist for free.

Visit [The Pregnancy HUB](#) for free perinatal support including service referrals, an online library of evidence-based information, and access to online programming on topics related to pregnancy and early parenting.