# Diet - Nutrition for the New Mother

A new mother needs good health and nutrition so she can have energy to take care of a new baby. Whether a mother breastfeeds or formula feeds the baby, it is still important to have a well balanced diet. Foods from all the food groups should be chosen to meet the new mother's energy needs and give her the nutrients needed for repair and healing.

## A HEALTHY EATING PLAN

The *My Pyramid plan* for Moms outlines what you should eat to help you and your baby stay healthy. The energy and amount of food you need depends on whether or not you are breastfeeding. If you are breastfeeding you will need more nutrients. If you choose not to breastfeed, your nutrition goal should be to return to a healthy weight. Limiting calories may be needed if you are not breastfeeding.

## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- For a personal plan based on your unique needs, see your Registered Dietitian or visit www.mypyramid.gov.
- Eat a variety of foods. The plan below will help guide you. The following chart has a suggested daily meal plan from the *My Pyramid* for Moms.
- Remember to:
  - Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.
  - Eat more dark-green and orange vegetables and cooked dried beans.
  - Make half your grains whole grains. Choose whole instead of refined grains.
  - Choose low-fat or lean meats and poultry.
  - Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products like milk, cheese or yogurt.

- **Food Group:** Fruits
- **Breastfeeding:** 2 cups
- **Non-Breastfeeding**: 2 cups
- **What Counts as a serving?**
  - 1 cup of fruit or juice.
  - ½ cup dried fruit.

- **Food Group: Vegetables**
- **Breastfeeding:** 3 cups
- **Non-Breastfeeding**: 2 ½ cups
- **What Counts as a serving?**
  - 1 cup raw or cooked vegetables.
  - Juice or 2 cups raw leafy vegetables.

- **Food Group:** Grains
- **Breastfeeding:** 8 ounces
- **Non-Breastfeeding**: 6 ounces
- **What Counts as a serving?**
  - 1 slice bread.
  - 1 oz ready-to-eat cereal.
  - ½ cup cooked pasta, rice or cereal.

- **Food Group:** Meat and Beans.
- **Breastfeeding:** 6 ½ ounces.
- **Non-Breastfeeding**: 5 ½ ounces.
- **What Counts as a serving?**

- 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or fish
- ¼ cup cooked dry beans
- ½ ounce nuts or 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter

- **Food Group:** Milk
- **Breastfeeding:** 3 cups
- **Non-Breastfeeding**: 3 cups
- **What Counts as a serving?**
  - 1 cup milk.
  - 8 ounces yogurt.
  - 1 ½ ounces cheese.
  - 2 ounces processed cheese.
  - 2 ounces processed cheese.

## TIPS FOR THE BREASTFEEDING MOM

- Rapid weight loss is **not** suggested when you are breastfeeding. By simply breastfeeding, you will be able to lose the weight gained during your pregnancy. Your doctor can keep track of your weight and tell you if your weight loss is appropriate.
- Be sure to drink fluids. You may notice that you are thirstier than usual. A suggestion is to drink a glass of water or other beverage whenever you breastfeed.
- Avoid alcohol as it can be passed into your breast milk.
- Limit caffeine drinks to no more than 2 to 3 cups per day.
- You may need to keep taking your prenatal vitamin while you are breastfeeding. Talk with your caregiver about taking a vitamin or supplement.

## RETURING TO A HEALTHY WEIGHT

- The *My Pyramid Plan* for Moms will help you return to a healthy weight. It will also provide the nutrients you need.
- You may need to limit "empty" calories. These include:
  - High fat foods like fried foods, fatty meats, fast food, butter and mayonnaise.
  - High sugar foods like sodas, jelly, candy, and sweets.
- Be physically active. Include 30 minutes of exercise or more each day. Choose an activity you like such as walking, swimming, biking or aerobics. Check with your caregiver before you start to exercise.

Document Released: 03/26/2009 Document Re-Released: 03/16/2010
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