

Eating well while breastfeeding

Breast milk has lots of important nutrients that your baby needs to grow and develop. It is important to eat well for both you and your baby's health and wellbeing. Eat foods from each of the five food groups every day to get the nutrients you and your baby need:

- vegetables – choose different colours and types
- lean meats, chicken, fish, and meat alternatives such as tofu, eggs, and legumes
- grain foods like bread, pasta, and rice
- fruit – include different colours and types
- dairy foods, and dairy alternatives with added calcium (look for at least 100mg of calcium per 100ml).

How and what to eat



Eat foods from the five food groups

This helps you to get the nutrients you need and keeps what you eat interesting.



Drink plenty of water over the day

Tip: drink a glass of water each time you sit down to feed your baby.



Eat regular meals and snacks

This helps to regulate your appetite, so you don't feel too hungry or full.



Eat high iron foods every day

Include some high iron foods in most meals. Meat, chicken, fish, eggs, nuts, legumes (eg baked beans or lentils), and tofu.



Eat calcium-rich foods every day

Include milk, yoghurt, cheese, or alternatives with at least 100mg calcium per 100ml.

How to eat and drink to protect your baby



Caffeine

Limit coffee, tea, chocolate, and cola drinks. Energy drinks are not suitable while breastfeeding. See the link below for more information.



Alcohol

No amount of alcohol is safe while breastfeeding. See the link below for more information and support.



Mercury

Limit shark (flake), swordfish, broadbill, and marlin. See the link below for more information.



Take time to rest when you can

Breastfeeding uses lots of energy and nutrients. Take some time out for yourself when you can.



Ask for the help you need

Talk to your GP, partner, family, or friends if you need extra support while breastfeeding.

What supplements are needed?



Iodine supplement needed for baby's brain and nervous system

Take a supplement containing 150 micrograms of iodine every day while breastfeeding.



Other supplements may be needed if levels are low

Talk to your GP if you eat a vegan diet, or if you think your Vitamin B12 or Vitamin D levels may be low.

For more information

Caffeine: www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/caffeine-and-breastfeeding

Alcohol: www.everymomentmatters.org.au/alcohol-and-pregnancy/breastfeeding/

Mercury: www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/chemicals/mercury/Pages/default.aspx