

# Nutritional Needs While Breastfeeding

After giving birth, experts say that a well-balanced diet and proper nutrition is even more important than during your pregnancy. The food choices you make will greatly influence the quality of your breast milk, and how quickly your body will rebound from the pregnancy.

You will want to include a high amount of complex carbohydrates, including:

- **Whole Grains**, such as brown rice, and rye or whole wheat bread,
- **Fruits**, such as apples, berries, peaches, and melons, and
- **Vegetables**, such as broccoli, squash, and bell peppers.

You should also ensure that you are obtaining the proper levels of calcium, protein, iron, and fat. Aim for three to five servings of fat per day and calcium-rich food.

Here are some additional nutrition tips:

- Increase your **fluid intake** by drinking at least one glass of water before you breastfeed, and aim for 3 Litres of fluids daily
- When choosing **seafood** options, opt for items that are higher in **omega-3 fats**, such as salmon, herring, trout, and pollock, and avoid items high in **mercury** such as shark, white tuna, and swordfish.
- **Avoid alcohol**, as it takes 2-3 hours to completely exit the breast milk stream.

Eating a wide variety of foods will also change the flavor of your breast milk. This will help introduce your baby to different tastes, which can help develop their palette at an early age.

*This article was written by Ingrid Toombs, Registered Dietitian with New Leaf Psychology Centre. For more information call **905-878-5050** or visit the website at [www.newleafpsychology.ca](http://www.newleafpsychology.ca).*



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