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# NURSING NUTRITION

Eating well is extremely important during your nursing journey, but not for the reasons you may have been told. Contrary to popular belief, a healthy diet and regular exercise do more to directly impact your overall health and your parenting success than to impact nutrient transfer to your infant.

Malnourished women make adequate amounts and quality of milk!

The great news about this is that your baby will be very likely be getting the nutrients they need from your milk, provided they are nursing frequently. This is because your amazing body will transfer nutrients from what is available from your diet, blood, fat, and your bones!

The down side is that without a balanced diet your body will continue to prioritize your baby's needs ahead of it's own, depleting your stores. When this depletion of resources occurs in our bodies we begin to feel weak, tired, we lose bone mass, and we make parenting choices based on these feelings that we would not make if we were at our peak of nutrition and rest. Well nourished mothers hold their babies more, play with their babies more, and have longer durations of breast feeding!

With all this in mind, eating a well balanced diet will dramatically improve your health, and support your baby's health, all while improving nursing sessions by decreasing fussiness at the breast.

## Myth?

- Caffeine is bad for the baby. False
- The caffeine intake of the nursing mother does not directly relate to the amount of caffeine in her milk. Mother's caffeine intake does not impact sleep in the infant.
- Limit caffeine to under 250 mg a day.** For your heart health and production not to protect the baby.
- Cow's milk in your diet may be the cause of allergies or colic in your baby. True
- If baby is experiencing tummy upset, gas, or bloody stools speak with a doctor right away. They can help you determine if eliminating cow's milk is needed.

## Tips

- Drink 8.5 to 12.5 cups, of water per day.
- Eat at least 2 cups of fruits and 2<sup>1/2</sup> cups vegetables per day. Variety helps, try 4 different fruits and 5 different vegetables daily.
- Continue your prenatal vitamins.
- Choose whole grains.
- Gobble up calcium containing foods. Dairy and dark leafy greens are a good start.
- Eat your cultural favorites! Babies can taste the flavors of your milk and already share your preferences due to consuming amniotic fluid.
- Talk with your doctor about Vitamin D supplements.
- Seek Vitamin C, B Vitamins especially folate, and DHA.