

GROWING HEALTHY MOTHERS



thrive nutrition



BY ALYSSA JOHNS, LM, CPM

NUTRITION TO THRIVE ON

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You deserve to be fully supported as the person doing the work of growing and birthing. Pregnancy nutrition is not just to grow healthy babies, our bodies are really good at that even with significant nutrition gaps, but to grow a healthy parent. Even in the presence of a fairly poor diet, babies take what they need from us to grow. Our bodies prioritize them. But without good nutrition, we are not left whole. Our pregnancy and postpartum nutrition is not just important for a healthy baby, but to keep us from being left depleted and deficient of vital minerals and vitamins that keep our body functioning and healthy.

In Dr. Oscar Serrallach's book *The Postnatal Depletion Cure*, he talks about seeing the physical and mental effects of this depletion up to 10 years after having a baby! Pregnancy depletes us of nutrients, and breastfeeding further depletes us. Serrallach even mentions that the peak incidence of depression postnatally occurs four years postpartum. Countries that prioritize the health, rest, and nutrition of the new mother do not see the same rate of depression and depletion postnatally.



Depletion of vitamins and minerals that our bodies need to thrive can contribute to extreme fatigue, brain fog, memory problems, thyroid disorders, adrenal dysfunction, depression and anxiety, hormone imbalance, and auto immune diseases. Our bodies need these nutrients to function fully!

We are extremely good at sacrificing for their children. If we know our babies will likely be ok even if our nutrition is not spot on, many of us ignore the consequences and the toll on our own bodies. But you are so very important. Your health and well being matter, just because you are a worthy human being who deserves to have the fullest life possible. You being nourished effects your health, which effects your family as well. Use this guide to help steer you towards the nutrition your body needs to thrive and not just survive parenthood.

NUTRITION

Pregnancy Guide

DARK LEAFY GREENS

These vegetables like kale and spinach contain many vitamins and minerals that keep you nourished including iron, magnesium, vitamin K, A, C and folate.

Throw them in your smoothies, soups, or eggs each day to get enough in your diet.



OMEGA 3'S

Baby's brain is built from these, and baby happily takes ours to meet it's needs, leaving our brains feeling foggy. Eating low mercury fish or supplementing with Omega 3 supplements helps protect our brains and moods. Algae is a good source for vegan diets.



ORANGE FOODS

Orange plant based foods contain carotenoids that help support and nourish your reproductive system. Enjoying sweet potatoes, carrots, canteloupe, and oranges can benefit your body in many ways.



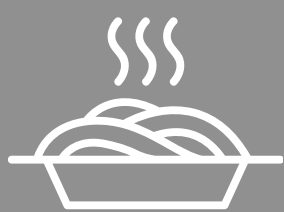
PROTEIN

We need adequate protein in order to build a baby, but protein intake also stabilizes our blood sugar. It is also thought to decrease your risk of pre-eclampsia and gestational diabetes. Make sure you have a protein element at every snack and meal.



DECREASE WHITE FOODS

Highly processed, starchy, and sugary foods fall into this category. These foods are appealing in pregnancy, but can cause blood sugar spikes that can worsen nausea and increase risk for diabetes.



AVOID

- Alcohol
- Unwashed produce
- Deli turkey
- Unpasteurized milk, cheese, and juice
- Smoked fish
- High mercury fish
- Highly processed foods



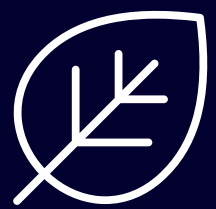
NUTRITION

Postpartum Guide

Ideally, these recommendations for postpartum should be followed for at least the first 40 days after baby is born.

COOKED VEGETABLES

Our digestive systems slow down during labor and take a while to return back to normal. Easy to digest food in the immediate postpartum is important, so stick with warm, cooked vegetables. Root vegetables are especially beneficial because of their warm grounding energy.



FAVORED FATS

A depleted body needs extra fats to recover and restore. Cultures that take excellent care of their mothers include lots of rich fats in their postpartum foods such as ghee, coconut oil, olive oil, grass fed butter, and full fat yogurt.



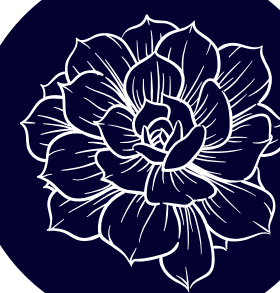
TEAS

Warm teas can help with digestion, circulation, sleep, nutritional support, and milk supply. Ginger, nettle, chai blends, chamomile and tumeric are beneficial and nutrient dense. Some cultures even serve mothers warm buttery tea for added fats.



WARMING SPICES

Most cultures value warmth in the postpartum period. Warm foods and warming spices have many benefits for digestion, milk production, circulation, and healing. Include spices like ginger, cardamom, cumin, cinnamon, and tumeric in your soups and drinks.



SOUPS & BONE BROTHS

Bone broths are nutritionally dense, warming, and easy on digestion. Soups with cooked vegetables and well cooked meats are easy to digest and provide the rich nutrients you need postpartum.



AVOID

- Cold drinks
- Cold raw foods
- Fried foods
- Any food you struggle to digest well
- Sage & peppermint (if breastfeeding)



Vitamins & Herbal Support



VITAMINS IN PREGNANCY

- Prenatal Vitamin w/ folate instead of folic acid
- Probiotics
- Omega 3
- Vitamin D (blood test if needed)
- Source of iodine if it's not in your prenatal and you don't use iodized salt
- At 35 weeks add in K1 drops or alfalfa capsules to help promote clotting at birth

VITAMINS IN POSTPARTUM

- Continue Prenatal Vitamin or switch to postnatal vitamin
- Vitamin D3 (blood test if needed)
- Omega 3

Suggestions for Pregnancy & Postpartum

Sometimes it is hard to get everything we need through modern diets. These are some nutrients that may need supplementation. For herbs and vitamin dosing, research or consult with an herbalist or naturopathic doctor.

HERBAL SUPPORT

01

In pregnancy nettle provides many vitamins & nutrients and supports the kidneys and liver. Postpartum, it can help nourish the body from depletion.

02

Red raspberry supports blood building and also is a tonic for the reproductive system, helping nourish and strengthen the uterus. This is great for both pregnancy and postpartum

03

Lavender taken internally as a tea or tincture can help with anxiety, sleep, and general relaxation. It can be helpful for pregnancy insomnia and postpartum to encourage sleep.

04

Ashwaganda is a wonderful postpartum herb. It can be taken daily and acts to calm the stress response in the body making postpartum stress and sleepiness easier on the body. It is also calming and can promote sleep.

VEGETARIAN & VEGAN CONSIDERATIONS

checklist

- **Vitamin B12:** This vitamin is only found in animal sources and not getting enough increases risk for miscarriage, neural tube defects, and preterm labor. Supplementation will be necessary during both pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- **Choline:** At least 450mg of choline is needed per day for fetal brain development, placental function, and prevention of neural tube defects. It is difficult to get enough in plant based diets, so supplementation may be needed. Eggs contain 115 mg and are a good source for a vegetarian diet.
- **Glycine:** It is needed to grow the baby's skeleton, teeth, organs, skin, hair, and nails. Plant based sources are sesame seed flour, spirulina algae, sunflower seed flour, pumpkin seeds, nori, beans and spinach.
- **Vitamin K2:** This vitamin is needed for proper bone mineralization so baby grows properly. Supplementation is needed for a vegan diet. For a vegetarian diet, egg yolks and hard cheeses are a good source.
- **Iron:** Low iron intake is a risk factor for preeclampsia, hypothyroidism, and preterm birth as well as impaired fetal brain development. Rich sources are legumes, pumpkin seeds, cooked leafy green vegetables, and spirulina algae.