



# NUTRITION

FOR PRE-CONCEPTION, PREGNANCY,  
AND POSTPARTUM HEALTH

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## **PRE-CONCEPTION, PREGNANCY, & POSTPARTUM NUTRITION**

*by Dr. Jennifer Curtiss*

Preventing disease and illness in children begins with the creation of healthy egg and sperm cells, a healthy pregnancy for the mother, and balanced post-partum nutrition.



# PRE-CONCEPTION NUTRITION & DETOXIFICATION

- It takes approximately 3 months to create a mature sperm and egg cell.
- This process should begin at least 3 months prior to the date of desired conception.
- Eat organic whole foods... eggs and healthy fats (olive oil, sesame oil, avocados, nuts, seeds, cold water fish).
- Remove inflammatory foods and allergens including folic acid and enriched flour, processed, fried, and synthetic foods, dairy, alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine.
- Support the body's routes of elimination for detox:
  - Liver: Eat beets, cruciferous veggies, take Milk Thistle, and a balanced Prenatal.
  - Kidneys: Drink 1/2 your body weight in oz of filtered water.
  - Digestive System: Take a daily probiotic, ask your Naturopath for a recommendation, take Magnesium Citrate as needed for constipation.
  - Lungs: practice deep abdominal breathing, get weekly aerobic exercise.
  - Skin: Sweat daily through exercise, sauna, or an epsom salt bath
- Ensure your prenatal vitamin contains a combination of calcium folinate, methylfolate, and adenosylcobalamin for optimal fetal development.



**DO NOT TAKE ANY PRENATAL OR VITAMIN CONTAINING SYNTHETIC FOLIC ACID.**

Ask Dr. Jennifer Curtiss for a recommendation.

- Use this time to assess hormonal health, nervous system health, nutrient health, and any potential obstacles to a healthy conception and pregnancy.
- Avoid conception so as not to transfer dangerous circulating toxins to the fetus.
- Avoid enriched flour, synthetic folic acid.
- See Cleanse Your Home handout.



## PREGNANCY & NOURISHMENT

- A pregnant mother needs approximately 2750-3000 kcalories/day. Consider eating 4 meals and frequent snacks (a hand-full of nuts and seeds can help to stabilize blood sugar swings). Metabolism increases by 15% during pregnancy.
- Continue eating organic whole grains, fruits, veggies, nuts, seeds, clean meats, legumes, and healthy fats.
- Meals should be balanced with protein, fiber, and healthy fats.



- Eat protein at every meal and for snacks to prevent morning sickness and to maintain energy for making a baby.
- Avoid: caffeine (crosses the placenta), alcohol (increases rate of low birth weight), trans fatty acids (reduces DHA levels essential for neural development).
- If morning sickness develops, try eating a simple carbohydrate such as bananas or crackers at first onset of nausea.
- Maintain optimal levels of magnesium to support bowel movements and to decrease risk of preterm labor, incompetent cervix, and pain during labor. High content magnesium foods include: nuts, seeds, and whole grains. Magnesium levels fall during pregnancy. Consume 350-400 mg/day.



- Maintain optimal levels of iron for adequate red blood cell production and oxygen supply to your baby and all the growing cells. High content iron foods include: meat, parsley, sea vegetables, and seeds. For best absorption of iron supplements, take them away from other minerals and with Vitamin C. Monitor iron status by testing serum ferritin levels. Consume at least 20 mg/day.



## PREGNANCY & NOURISHMENT

*(CONTINUED)*



- Maintain optimal levels of folate to produce healthy new cells and to prevent neural tube defects and other birth defects. Natural food sources include fresh leafy greens, nuts, seeds, and legumes. Avoid prenatal vitamins and processed foods enriched with synthetic “folic acid.” Consume 600-800 mcg/day.
- Maintain optimal levels of B6 (risk of deficiency increases in those with a history of oral contraceptive or tobacco use prior to pregnancy). Low levels of B6 may increase symptoms of mood disorders and morning sickness in mothers, low birth weight and behavioral abnormalities in infants. Food sources of B6 include: wheat bran, meat, watermelon, banana, avocado, and sunflower seeds. Consume at least 10 mg/day.
- Maintain optimal levels of B12 for healthy cell formation and stamina. Food sources of B12 include meat, eggs, fish, brewer’s yeast, nori/sea vegetables. Consume 600 mcg/day.
- Maintain optimal levels of Vit D 3 to support immunity, pediatric bone development, and prevent growth retardation. Take 4-6000 IUs of Vit D3 daily while pregnant and nursing.
- Support a healthy microbial balance with fermented foods and/or a daily probiotic.
- Eat a diet high in omega 3 fatty acids, or take 4000mg of fish oil or flax seed oil daily. Food sources of omega 3’s include: fish, nuts, seeds, wheat germ.
- Enzyme secretion decreases during pregnancy, consider digestive support in the form of apple cider vinegar, bitters, or digestive enzymes before meals.





## POSTPARTUM & REPLENISHMENT



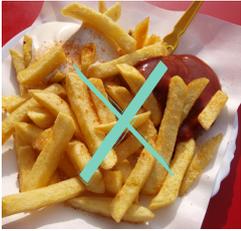
- If nursing, follow the dietary guidelines for pregnancy, by maintaining 2700-3000 kcal/day, eat adequate protein, healthy fats, fiber, and sources of magnesium, calcium, iron, folate, B12, B6, Vit D 3, probiotics, and omega 3 fatty acids.

- Support mood and hormone production with the following:
  - Tryptophan: an essential amino acid necessary to make the calming neurotransmitter, serotonin, and the sleep hormone, melatonin. Found in: turkey, chicken, lamb, fish, beef, cashews, avocado, nuts, sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, and eggs.
  - Omega 3 Fatty Acids: Anti-inflammatory fatty acids that protect the brain and nervous system, and they support mood. Found in: cold water fish, nuts, and seeds, olive oil.
  - Calcium and Magnesium: Muscle relaxants, relieve tension. Magnesium is found in: whole grains, nuts, seeds, legumes. Calcium is found in: cold water fish, green veggies, bone broths.





## FOODS TO LIMIT



- Sweets (artificial sweeteners)
- Corn Syrup and Fructose
- Gluten
- Dairy
- Foods containing enriched flour and folic acid
- Corn and corn products
- Caffeine
- All juices
- Trans-fatty acid oils (fried foods)
- Food dyes/ Preservatives
- Processed foods, “junk food”

## FOODS TO EAT



- Organic
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Legumes
- Nuts & Seeds
- Meats: fish, turkey, chicken, wild game, shellfish, beef, veal, eggs
- Cold water fish
- Healthy oils: olive, avocado, coconut, and sesame
- Whole grains, no more than 3 servings/day i.e. brown rice, quinoa, oats
- Stevia, Xylitol, Maple Syrup, Molasses
- Green tea