

Safe preparation of food

- * Always wash hands with clean running water and soap before preparing food and eating.
- * Keep preparation area and utensils clean.
- * Cook meat, fish and eggs until well done to avoid food poisoning.
- * Wash vegetables before cutting, cook immediately for a short time and eat immediately to preserve nutrients.
- * Wash raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating.
- * Soak legumes overnight before cooking.



Other important tips

- * Start antenatal clinic as soon as you suspect you are pregnant within the first 3 months to monitor your health and the growth of your baby.
- * Do not use alcohol, narcotics or tobacco products.
- * Take deworming tablets as prescribed to treat worms and prevent anemia.
- * Rest during the day especially during the last 3 months of pregnancy and the first months after delivery.
- * Always sleep under an insecticide-treated bed net to prevent malaria and anemia. Take antimalarials as prescribed.



HIV and nutrition

- * It is important for all women to know their HIV status, especially if they are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- * To know your HIV status you must take a test.
- * If you are HIV-positive, you should consult your health care provider for care and treatment and information on how best to feed your baby.



- * If you are HIV-positive, you need extra food to give you extra energy. HIV puts an additional strain on your body and may reduce your appetite. Eating a variety of nutritious foods is important.
- * Protect yourself and your baby from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections during pregnancy and while breastfeeding by practicing safe sex by using condoms consistently and correctly. Consult a family planning counselor as soon as possible after giving birth.



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Nutrition

During Pregnancy and Breastfeeding



Protect Your Health

Practice Good Nutrition

Eat a variety of foods

When you are pregnant or breastfeeding your body needs balanced meals that can be obtained from a variety of foods. Eating different foods each day helps to ensure that you get all of the calories and nutrients that you and your baby need.



Good nutrition helps you to:

- * Gain at least 12 kg during your pregnancy with an average of 1 kg weight gain per month.
- * Prevent anemia.
- * Improve the physical and mental development of your baby.
- * Prepare your body for breastfeeding. The energy and nutrients needed during breastfeeding are higher than during pregnancy.
- * Decrease your chances of having a low birth weight baby, premature delivery or a stillbirth.

Eat Balanced Meals

How to plan a balanced meal

Eat at least 3 balanced meals plus snacks every day. Select foods from each of the following groups:



Cereals, Tubers and Roots
such as: maize, sorghum, rice, millet, wheat, cassava, cooking bananas, sweet potatoes, yams and arrow root



Legumes and Animal Products
such as: beans, peas, groundnuts, pigeon peas, cow peas, meat, eggs, milk, fish, omena, chicken and edible insects



Fruits
such as: mango, banana, papaya, guava, orange, baobab fruit, pineapple, passion fruit, avocado and zambarau



Vegetables
such as: dark green leafy vegetables, okra, carrots, African eggplant, tomatoes, cucumbers, mlenda, pumpkin and eggplant



Fats and Oils
such as: sunflower oil, coconut milk, red palm oil, oil seeds, margarine and butter

Oil and fat added to vegetables and other foods improve the absorption of some vitamins and provide extra energy.

Protect Your Health

Pregnant and breastfeeding women need to

- * Eat more during meal times or eat small frequent meals.
- * Eat snacks between meals.
- * Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables with every meal.
- * Drink enough water everyday (8 glasses or 1.5 liters).
- * Avoid taking tea or coffee with meals because they interfere with iron absorption and may contribute to anemia. It's better to drink tea or coffee an hour before or after a meal.



What supplements do you need?

- * Throughout your pregnancy and for at least 3 months after your baby is born you will need iron, folic acid or a multiple-micronutrient supplement to prevent anemia. It is better to take iron tablets with meals to increase absorption and to decrease potential side effects, particularly nausea.
- * Always use iodized salt to prevent iodine deficiency.
- * Take vitamin A supplements immediately after delivery or within 6 weeks as recommended by your health care provider. This will help to build your baby's immune system.
- * Always follow your health care providers' recommendations.

