

HEALTH TIPS FOR NEW PARENTS



DEAR PARENT,

Congratulations on the birth of your baby and for choosing to participate in WIC! Families who choose WIC receive many helpful resources and lead a healthier lifestyle – it's a choice to be proud of! As a new parent, WIC offers you:

- ✓ Referrals to health care and other services
- ✓ Information about smart food choices for you
- ✓ Feeding information for your baby
- ✓ Breastfeeding or chestfeeding support
- ✓ Ways to keep your baby safe
- ✓ Benefits to buy healthy foods for you and your baby

This booklet has tips to help keep you and your new baby healthy. These tips do not replace a health care provider's advice.

WIC can help you learn more about healthy eating and provide suggestions on feeding your baby as they grow. We hope you enjoy being on WIC.

Sincerely,

Your WIC staff

Next steps:



GET HEALTH CARE

Learn ways to stay healthy.

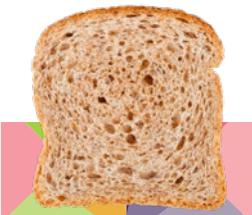
- Go to your postpartum checkup.
- Ask when you will need a checkup again.
- Stay up-to-date with shots. Ask about measles, polio, tetanus, and flu shots.

If you need help, contact:

Nevada Medicaid, which is a medical program that offers health care services for families. To find out if you qualify, call [1-800-992-0900](tel:1-800-992-0900) or visit dwss.nv.gov

CHOOSE FOODS FOR GOOD HEALTH

- Every day, eat foods from all 5 food groups.
- Eat regular meals and choose a variety of grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy, and protein.
- These are general recommendations. Find the right amount for you by going to <https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan>



GRAINS | Breastfeeding 6 ounces
Non-Breastfeeding 5 ounces

1 ounce from the Grains Group counts as:

- 1 slice bread or tortilla
- ½ bagel or hamburger bun
- ½ cup cooked rice, noodles, or cereal
- 1 cup flake-type cereal

Tips

- Eat whole grains like:
 - Oatmeal
 - Whole wheat bread
 - Brown rice
 - Corn or whole wheat tortillas



VEGETABLES | Breastfeeding 2½ cups
Non-Breastfeeding 2 cups

1 cup from the Vegetable Group counts as:

- 1 cup raw or cooked/canned vegetables; or
- 2 cups leafy salad greens; or
- 1 cup 100% vegetable or tomato juice

Tips

- Eat the rainbow – select vegetables of all colors
- Add to: scrambled eggs, rice, noodles, salads, and casseroles

FRUITS | Breastfeeding 2 cups
Non-Breastfeeding 1½ cups



1 cup from the Fruit Group counts as:

- 1 cup raw, frozen, or cooked/canned fruit; or
- ½ cup dried fruit; or
- 1 cup 100% fruit juice

Tips

- Choose a variety of fruits including different colors
- Put sliced or chopped fruit on cereal, pancakes, pudding, or frozen yogurt



DAIRY | Breastfeeding and Non-Breastfeeding 3 cups

1 cup from the Dairy Group counts as:

- 1 cup low-fat (1%) or non-fat dairy milk or yogurt; or
- 1 cup lactose-free dairy milk or yogurt; or
- 1 cup fortified soy milk or yogurt; or
- 1½ ounces hard cheese (cheddar, mozzarella, Swiss)

Tips

- Choose (1%) or non-fat milk
- Ask your WIC clinic to switch out some of your fluid milk benefits for yogurt or cheese



PROTEIN | Breastfeeding 5½ ounces
Non-Breastfeeding 5 ounces

1 ounce from the Protein Foods Group counts as:

- 1 ounce beef, chicken, turkey, tofu, or fish
- ¼ cup canned light tuna
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup cooked beans
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter

Tips

- A 3-ounce serving is the size of a deck of cards
- Choose lean meats: bake, broil, or grill them
- Did you know beans are a great source of protein? Use your WIC benefits to purchase canned or dried beans



SAMPLE MENU

Eat regular meals and snacks throughout the day to have more energy and think clearly. Be sure to drink plenty of water daily!

Breakfast

- Hard boiled egg
- Whole grain toast or tortilla
- 100% juice

Morning Snack

- Sliced peaches
- 1% or non-fat milk

Lunch

- Turkey sandwich with lettuce & tomato on whole wheat bread
- Carrot sticks
- Apple
- 1% or non-fat milk

Afternoon Snack

- Water with lemons or fruit flavoring
- String cheese
- Whole wheat crackers

Dinner

- Spaghetti with meat sauce
- Green beans
- Tossed green salad
- Grapes
- 1% or non-fat milk



BREAKFAST IDEAS

Make time for breakfast. It helps you get through the day. Here is a simple plan. Try choosing a food from each column for a healthy breakfast.

Bread, Cereal, or Other Grain	+	Fruit or Vegetable	+	Dairy, Protein, or Both
Oatmeal	+	Sliced apples	+	1% or non-fat milk
Whole grain waffle	+	Mixed berries	+	2 slices turkey bacon
Whole grain tortilla	+	Tomatoes, onion, and bell peppers	+	WIC beans and lowfat cheese
Whole wheat bread	+	Avocado	+	Egg
Dry WIC cereal	+	Raisins	+	Peanuts
Pizza topped with	+	Vegetables	+	Lowfat cheese

BEST BAKED BREAKFAST CEREAL

- 2 cups old fashioned oatmeal
- 1 apple, peeled and shredded
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- ¾ cup raisins or other dried fruit like apricots or cherries (chopped)
- 2 cups 1% or nonfat milk
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 Tbsps. butter, melted
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Mix all ingredients together and place in 8" x 8" pan. Bake at 350 degrees in oven until all liquid is absorbed – about 35-40 minutes. This recipe works well to refrigerate and warm up the next day.

Serve hot cereal with milk.
Serves 4-6.



BE SMART ABOUT FAST FOODS

On the go? Ask for these smart choices:

- Grilled chicken or grilled chicken strips
- Turkey or roast beef sub sandwich
- Regular size hamburger, without mayo or cheese
- Main dish salad or side salad (dressing on the side)
- Pizza topped with green peppers, tomatoes, and mushrooms
- Baked potato with vegetable and cheese toppings
- Fruit, as your side, or a mixed fruit bowl
- Water, 1% or non-fat milk, or 100% juice



TIPS FOR QUICKLY MAKING FOODS AT HOME!

Even on busy days moms say with a little planning they can make foods at home that are healthier, easier, and cheaper than going out for fast food. **These are tips from other moms:**



"I look for items at the store that are easy to prepare, like canned beans for quick chili, bagged vegetables and salads, and even frozen pizza with added fresh veggies make quick meals."



"I like to sit down and plan at least one week of meals before I shop. I try to include everyone's favorites when I make my plan."



"When we have to make dinner on the run, I remind myself that peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with a glass of milk is something we all like – and it's better for us than stopping at the drive-through."



"I use the weekend to cook. I put leftovers in the fridge or the freezer. Sometimes I cook ground beef or turkey and freeze it in meal-sized portions. We pull these out for taco or spaghetti night!"

BE HEALTHY

Folic Acid

Taking folic acid daily is an inexpensive, safe, and easy way to help protect your health and the health of your future babies from birth defects.

Folic acid is a B vitamin that every cell in your body needs. This vitamin might help protect you from a heart attack, stroke, and cancer.

Folic acid helps protect your unborn baby's spine and brain from birth defects. However, the protection needs to begin before you become pregnant. People sometimes become pregnant without planning it. Be sure you are getting 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid daily by:

- Taking a multi-vitamin or prenatal vitamin
- Eating WIC cereal or other fortified or enriched grain product
- Eating healthy foods like:
 - green vegetables, such as spinach or kale
 - cooked beans, fruits, and whole grains

It is recommended to get at least 400 mcg of folic acid every day.



BE ACTIVE WHENEVER YOU CAN

Being active even 10 minutes three times a day can:

- Give you more energy
- Lower stress and help you relax
- Work off excess weight
- Tone your muscles
- Help you feel great

Take it easy, at first. Your body needs to heal. Ask your health care provider what you can do and when you can do it.

Walking is a great way to get and stay fit. Put your baby in a stroller, infant sling or carrier and walk. Walk at the mall, school, or community center. Ask your friends or family to join you.

Start with a 5 or 10 minute walk. After one week, walk a little longer or farther. Set a goal that works for you.

Here are other easy ways to move your body:

- March in place when you watch TV or talk on the phone
- Play music and dance
- Take the stairs instead of the escalator or elevator
- Park the car farther away from the entrance when you can



TIP: MAKE ONE CHANGE AT A TIME

Change your health habits one at a time.
Get used to one change before you make the next one.

What food can you cut back on?

EXAMPLE:
Cut back to one sugary beverage (soda, flavored coffee, energy drink) a day.

What food can you change?

EXAMPLE:
Eat a vegetable or side salad instead of french fries.

What can you do to be more active?

EXAMPLE:
Take the stairs, not the elevator.

SMALL CHANGES AND HEALTHY CHOICES ADD UP TO A HEALTHIER YOU!

Small changes can make a big difference in helping you feel good, have more energy, and lose weight. Here are tips that moms have shared that worked for them:



Don't eat food directly from the package -

Portion out foods, like crackers, nuts, trail mix, pretzels, cheese cubes, etc., into individual containers or zip-top bags. Better yet, store ready to eat vegetables in a container for quick healthy snacks without all the calories.

Leave some food in the kitchen at mealtimes -

Serve lower calorie vegetables and salads family-style at the table and serve the main dish in the kitchen.



Stop eating when you feel full -

Remind yourself that it's OK to stop eating before your plate is empty or before everyone is done eating.

Watch your portions -

Use smaller plates and put less on your plate. Studies show we eat more when there's more to eat.



Cut back on some foods -

Cut calories by cutting out foods high in fats and added sugar. Decide to choose sweet drinks, cookies, cakes, candies, and ice cream as occasional treats. Limit meats like ribs, bacon, and hot dogs.

Cook at home -

Try healthier recipes that use less fat, sugar, and salt. Go to MyPlate Kitchen (myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen) for easy, budget friendly recipes.



Drink water -

Keep water with you throughout the day. Staying hydrated can help you tell the difference between hunger and thirst.

Eating healthy is only one part of feeling great and having more energy -

Being active helps too. Staying active helps new moms relieve stress - and having a new baby can be stressful! Ask your health care provider when it's OK to exercise and then start out slow. Refer to "Be Active" page 14.



For a personal daily food plan, visit MyPlate.gov.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BABY'S CUES

HUNGER



When your baby is hungry, they may:

- Suck on their hands or fingers
- Move their arms and legs
- Make sucking noises
- Pucker their lips
- Search for the nipple (root)

WHAT YOUR NEWBORN IS SAYING

I NEED SOMETHING TO BE DIFFERENT



As you get to know your baby, you will begin to recognize what they are trying to tell you. Learning how your baby communicates with you takes time. When your baby needs a break from playing and learning, or needs some quiet time, they may:

- Look away, turn away, or arch their back
- Frown or have a glazed look in their eyes
- Stiffen their hands, arms, or legs
- Yawn or fall asleep

FULLNESS

When your baby is full, they may:

- Suck slower or stop sucking
- Relax their hands and arms
- Push or turn away from the nipple
- Fall asleep



I WANT TO BE NEAR YOU

As your newborn gets older, you will be better able to tell when they are ready to interact, learn, or play. When your baby is asking you to help them learn more about you and their new world, they may:

- Have a relaxed face and body
- Follow your voice and face
- Reach toward you
- Stare at your face
- Raise their head



FEEDING IS A SPECIAL TIME WITH YOUR BABY!

Pay attention to your baby's cues and feed when they are awake and calm and before they begin to cry. Your baby is learning to trust you will feed them when they are hungry. Don't worry about spoiling them. You can't spoil a baby.

You can feel proud of the care you are giving when you listen to your baby's cues. Let your baby feed at their own pace and listen when they give fullness cues. You are responsible for feeding human milk or formula and your baby is responsible for when, how much, and how fast they eat.



Your baby trusts you to keep them safe and happy.



FOR BREASTFEEDING OR CHESTFEEDING PARENTS:

Congratulations on your choice to breastfeed or chestfeed your baby! Human milk provides the perfect nutrition made just for your baby. It helps protect your baby from ear infections, colds, allergies, diarrhea, and constipation.

Ask WIC staff about:

- Your breastfeeding or chestfeeding questions
- Returning to work or school while breastfeeding or chestfeeding
- Pumping and storing human milk
- Protections for breastfeeding or chestfeeding parents in public or returning to work or school
- Breastfeeding or chestfeeding support available at your WIC clinic

For more information about breastfeeding or chestfeeding visit:

- [NevadaWIC.org](https://www.nevadawic.org)
- WIC Breastfeeding Support at <https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/>
- [NevadaBreastfeeds.org](https://www.nevadabreastfeeds.org)

If you choose to pump and feed your baby human milk in a bottle, be sure to hold baby upright during feedings. Ask WIC staff about paced bottle feeding.



FOR FORMULA FEEDING MOMS:

Whether you choose to feed your baby human milk or formula, your baby counts on you to help them eat well.

- To ensure your baby is getting the proper nutrition they need, you must follow the mixing directions on the can or from your health care provider.
- If others care for your baby, be sure they know how to correctly mix and prepare the formula.
- Throw away any formula left in the bottle one hour after the start of feeding or two hours after being prepared. If you prepare bottles ahead, store them in a refrigerator until you are ready to feed your baby. Only prepare enough bottles for 24 hours at a time.
- Never microwave infant formula. Microwaving creates hot spots that can burn your baby's mouth. Warm the bottle in hot water. Test the temperature by turning the bottle upside down and allowing a few drops to fall on your wrist – it should feel lukewarm, not hot!
- Your baby only needs formula in their bottle, never sweetened drinks or water.
- It's normal for your baby to have times when they want to eat more. This usually occurs during growth spurts.

Hold baby upright when feeding them from a bottle – they like to see your face. Propping your baby's bottle can cause them to choke and may cause ear infections. Talk to WIC staff about paced bottle feeding.

SIGNS OF POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Any of these feelings that last more than two weeks are signs of depression:

- Feeling sad, helpless, angry, or overwhelmed
- Crying a lot
- Having thoughts of hurting yourself or baby
- Eating too little or too much
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Having no energy or motivation
- Having memory issues, trouble focusing, or making decisions
- Feeling worthless, guilty, or like a bad parent
- Losing interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- Having headaches, aches and pains, or stomach problems which don't go away

If you think you might have postpartum depression (PPD), talk to your health care provider, call [1-800-944-4773](tel:1-800-944-4773) or visit Postpartum Support International at postpartum.net/get-help/

If you have thoughts of harming yourself or your baby, get immediate help by calling the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255).

Enjoy your new baby and take care of yourself too.

- Ask for help from family and friends. Let them shop, cook, and clean.
- Nap when your baby naps. If you can't sleep, lie down and rest.
- Connect and talk with a friend.



Remember you are not alone. There are a lot of parents just like you. You will find joy ahead as your relationship grows with your new baby and you learn about each other. It will get better with help and support!

KEEP YOU AND YOUR BABY SAFE

X Stay away from all smoke.

There is no safe level of smoke exposure for your baby. All forms of smoke are harmful. For a healthier baby and a healthier you, choose to be free from tobacco, vape or e-cigarettes, marijuana, and second-hand smoke.

Set a “NO SMOKING” rule for your home. Don’t let people smoke around your baby. Get help to quit, visit [call 1-800-QUIT-NOW](tel:1800QUITNOW) or visit Nevada.quitlogix.org

X Tobacco

- Cigarettes and other forms of tobacco are dangerous to the health of everyone. Nicotine from tobacco passes through human milk.
- Secondhand smoke and smoking while feeding your baby exposes baby to nicotine and other harmful chemicals.

X Vape or E-cigarettes

- Most vape or e-cigarettes contain nicotine and other harmful chemicals.
- Don’t use vape or e-cigarettes, or allow others to use vape or e-cigarettes around your baby.

X Marijuana (medical and recreational)

- Any kind of smoke is a health risk.
- The active ingredient in marijuana (THC) passes through human milk.

X Stay away from alcohol and drugs.

If you need help, talk with your health care provider or use these resources:

- Sober Moms, Healthy Babies by visiting <https://sobermomshealthybabies.org/> or calling 1-800-450-9530
- Nevada 2-1-1 by visiting <https://www.nevada211.org/addiction-services/>

Never leave your child with people who are drinking or using drugs.





QUESTIONS?

Ask your local WIC office or call the
Nevada State WIC office at

1-800-8-NEV-WIC

(1-800-8-638-942)

NEVADAWIC.ORG

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